

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk May 29, 2016

Mid edition No 714

EDUCATION

College staff face the axe

Consultation begins as management changes

HISTORY

Dockyard's £9m treasure trove

Historic find forms key part of major new addition

ENTERTAINMENT

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Sailing into the future with an eye on the past

ONCE upon a time, as a certain rabble rousing alternative national anthem proclaims, Britain really did rule the waves.

Our proud nation was the global power, our military might second to none, and it seemed little could change that.

For many, that position of control and clout lingers on in the British psyche like some sort of animal instinct.

The reality today, of course, is that while we are still a significant power on the world stage we should not kid ourselves to think we still command the oceans.

That was hammered home this week when I was fortunate enough to be given a guided tour of a major new exhibition at the Historic Dockyard Chatham. It focuses on that period when our warships roamed the seas and our sense of ownership of lands and



Editor **Chris Britcher**

people was overwhelming.

It is a fascinating venue and I'd strongly recommend a visit me hearties (couldn't resist). But it's also something of a wake up call. Because in a period when Britain's position in the world is at the heart of almost every debate over the EU referendum, we do need to acknowledge that time has moved on. Evolution of nations and peoples mean the balance of power has shifted beyond recognition. And it won't return.

Britain's past is remarkable and one we should all be aware of. But our pride in Britain today should not be measured against it. We cannot aspire to the same power again. Nor should we. But we should always act, as one, to aspire to be the best. And whether that is as part of a union or not, the reality of our future should not be based on rose-tinted views of our past.

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College to shed jobs as it links up with rising rival

By Chris Britcher

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STAFF at Canterbury College face an uncertain future with the axe set to fall after it agreed to a significant strengthening of ties with East Kent College (EKC).

A single senior management team will oversee both institutions going forward, with EKC's existing principal Graham Razey taking over as acting head of both.

By merging a number of key services, from the senior executive team to corporate services, it is hoped to save around £1m.

It appears for now, at least, it is stopping short of a full merger, and both brands will continue.

In a joint statement issued by both colleges this morning, it said: "Canterbury College is looking ahead to the severe government funding cuts next year, and is announcing further budget reductions beyond these savings at senior management level.

"Courses which could be better offered by EKC will be transferred – and vice versa. Some departments will be merged and savings made across a range of support



HEAD: East Kent College principal Graham Razey will now act as leader for Canterbury College too

activities. The outline proposals will be announced to staff today for consultation. Although there will be job losses, the college [Canterbury] will be looking to minimise the number of staff who will be affected. It is seeking to have the new arrangements in place by the end of the summer term."

Chairman of Canterbury College governors Colin Carmichael added: "The governors have worked with college management to review all

aspects of the college's finances and operations. We are having to take difficult decisions, but further education is not immune from government cuts to public expenditure, and we have to take action now to ensure that the college continues to thrive – especially in our new partnership with EKC."

Canterbury College has struggled financially in recent years and there were concerns ahead of the forthcoming area review of all

colleges in Kent this autumn.

That is likely to rap out a warning that colleges should consider more joint working to reduce costs while still delivering the necessary courses.

EKC's clout has grown considerably in recent years. After growing its Thanet base, it recently took over the Folkestone and Dover campuses of the former K College.

Alison Clarke, principal of Canterbury College retires in July.

Bank holiday warning as work disrupts trains and protests hit France

TRAIN users are being warned to expect disruption to services over the long bank holiday weekend as major engineering work diverts a host of services into and around London.

It is due to Network Rail - which manages rail infrastructure - continues its on-going railway upgrade plan for the south east.

And that will mean from Saturday to Monday a number of significant changes to the timetable.

There will be no Southeastern services at Charing Cross, Waterloo East or Cannon Street, services will be diverted to Victoria, Blackfriars, or New Cross.

Nor will there be any Southeastern services at London Bridge except for Hastings line trains which, after Tonbridge, will run via Redhill and East Croydon.

Additionally, there will be no Southeastern services at Deptford, Greenwich, Maze Hill and Westcombe Park. Buses will run between New Cross and Charlton calling at all

these stations.

That's all in addition to buses continuing to replace trains between Folkestone Central and Dover Priory while Network Rail builds a new viaduct.

On Sunday, there be no Southeastern services between Plumstead, Abbey Wood, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Dartford. Replacement buses will run instead.

Nor will there be Southeastern services between Canterbury East, Bekesbourne, Adisham, Aylesham, Snowdown, Shepherds Well, Kearsney and Dover Priory. Replacement buses will run instead.

On Monday, a Saturday-based service will run on all Southeastern routes. Passengers are advised to check Southeastern's website before setting out.

Meanwhile, the ports are expecting one of the busiest weekends of the year - despite fuel protests in France meaning many motorists have been left struggling to fill their tanks.

Prison terms for duo who stole Transits around county

TWO thieves who stole Transit vans across Maidstone and Medway over a period of 10 months have been jailed.

James Steel, 31, from Godmersham, and Wayne Byrne, 34, from Dagenham, were responsible for stealing vehicles and tools worth more than £100,000 between March 1 and November 14, 2014.

The pair stole vans, before

driving them to secluded locations and removing any tracking devices they could find.

Steel pleaded guilty to 11 counts of theft and one count of attempted theft and was sentenced to three years and eight months in jail.

Byrne pleaded guilty to five counts of theft and one count of attempted theft and received one year and eight months behind bars.

Baseball bat thug sentenced to 10 years for vicious attack

A 37-year-old from Leysdown who viciously attacked his neighbour with a baseball bat has been jailed for 10 years.

The 50-year-old victim suffered extensive facial injuries including a broken jaw in the incident, as well as fractured ribs and severe bruising to his back and legs.

Ricky King, 37, formerly of Sheppey Beach Villas, was

arrested and charged following the assault on January 24 and later pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm.

He also admitted assaulting a woman immediately following the incident and was sentenced for both offences at Maidstone Crown Court on Thursday.

King will also serve an extended licence period of four years.



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Trickster claims pet-eating 5ft python on loose

A WOMAN has apologised for causing "mass hysteria" by falsely claiming her cat-eating snake had escaped from her home.

Charlie Franks posted an alert on a closed Facebook group for members of her local community.

She wrote that her male pet could eat "small cats" and was on the loose in Sittingbourne.

It was claimed the 5ft python had slipped out of a home on the Eden Village estate. Word quickly spread and the story became headline news.

But just a few hours later, Ms Franks realised things were getting out of hand and wrote on the Facebook group: "At first it was a joke but didn't realise that it would escalate to this extent - sorry for scaring everyone."



SAFE: Cat was eventually released

Cat in a right pickle after jammed in jar

A CURIOUS cat was caught out this week after it was trapped inside a pickle jar left on the street in Kemsley, Sittingbourne.

Staff at DS Smith Paper Limited spotted the cat and called in the RSPCA.

And as our photograph reveals it was in a right jam.

Animal collection officer Emma Byrne said: "I spotted the frightened and confused cat under a portable cabin but couldn't reach him so set up a trap.

"We went back to check on him that night but he'd still not ventured out from his hiding place and stayed hidden for the next few days.

"But, when we returned again on Thursday he was sat in the middle of the yard and we managed to catch him with a net.

"I freed him from the jar and we gave him a check over but, luckily, he wasn't injured and was in a good condition."

ACO Byrne added: "Leaving litter lying around can be very dangerous for wildlife and for our pets.

"This puss had a lucky escape but discarded jars, tin cans, elastic bands or carrier bags can be a real death trap for animals and birds.

"Litter can be lethal."

If you see an animal in distress, call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

Students pulled out of exams as five schools hit by explosive hoax calls

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A NUMBER of Kent schools this week fell victim to a series of nationwide bomb scares.

Anonymous phone calls were made to five schools throughout the county, leading to severe disruption, with some students even being taken out of their GCSE exams.

On Friday, police were called to three separate incidents after staff had taken the decision to evacuate the buildings.

Officers were called to Dame Janet Primary Academy School in Ramsgate after an incident was reported at 10.01am, where pupils and staff initially gathered on the school field following an evacuation of the building by the school before being sent home.

Officers were also on the scene at Bower Grove School in Fant Lane, Maidstone, after they received a telephone call at 10.15am, where they completed a search before pupils



THREATS: Five schools affected

were also sent home having been moved to Westborough Primary School as a precaution.

Similar scenes were experienced at Welling School, where a spokesperson said: "The call has now been

identified as a hoax and is under thorough investigation by the police.

"Students who were involved in public examinations and were interrupted will not be disadvantaged by the exam board."

In addition, two schools in Folkestone – Stella Maris Primary School and Sandgate Primary School – both received calls on Friday that suggested that a man was in the area with a firearm.

Officers attended both schools and following an assessment they both remained open.

Police say all of today's calls are being reviewed in connection with calls that have been received by establishments nationally.

Earlier in the week, students at the Canterbury Academy had to be pulled out of exams, but similarly, bosses at the school confirmed it would be making special consideration claims to exam boards.

Barming Primary School was also evacuated at a similar time on Monday afternoon.

Register this week to secure Kent Test spot

REGISTRATION for September's Kent Test opens on Wednesday.

The exam, sat by Year 6 pupils, will determine whether they are suitable for consideration for a grammar school place. The test this year will take place on September 8 and all applications to sit it must be made by Friday, July 1.

Roger Gough, Kent County Council cabinet member for education said: "Any parent considering a grammar school for their child needs to register for them to take the test.

"We are particularly keen to encourage pupils eligible for free school meals to register and sit the test as more grammar schools move to include priority for these learners in their admissions arrangements.

"The best way to register is online, 95 per cent of all test registrations are made this way; it speeds up the process and allows results to be sent by email."

To register online, visit www.kent.gov.uk/ola.

Development plans take stride forward

TONBRIDGE and Malling's local plan - the guide to development in the borough over the next 25 years - has taken a step forward after the publication of the interim sites assessment.

Released on Friday, it reviews all sites submitted for possible development.

Howard Rogers, cabinet member for strategic planning and infrastructure, explained: "The interim sites assessment is not any indication or guarantee that sites will be included in the local plan.

"Sites having potential at this stage will be subject to public consultation and will be considered in more detail later in the process when planning merit can be applied."

The council says it has received more than 250 submissions and each has been assessed individually.

Cllr Rogers added: "In September this year a major public consultation exercise will take place, which will look at how we meet future needs and help us to identify sites that are likely to come forward in the local plan, along with those that will not."

Huge response to third crossing plans

THE consultation on a proposed Thames crossing east of Gravesend was the largest ever for a UK road project, it was revealed this week.

More than 47,000 people responded to the proposals designed to ease congestion at the Dartford Crossing.

The bulk of the responses came online, with nearly 30,000 people responding.

Local government and industry groups also chipped in, with more than 500 responses between them.

In the consultation, Highways England announced its preferred route would see a new road built from the M2 heading north through the Gravesham countryside, where a bored tunnel would then cross the Thames and come out at Tilbury.

If built, it would be the first new road crossing for the Thames east of London for 25 years.

Highways England consultation manager Martin Potts claimed the public had "exceeded expectations" with the wealth of responses.

If publicly funded, the road could be ready by 2025. A decision is due later this year.

Manston Airport CPO hopes crash but plans remain alive

By Tom Pyman

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THE hunt for an indemnity partner to launch a compulsory purchase order (CPO) for Manston Airport has been abandoned by Thanet District Council.

At the end of last year, the council carried out a soft marketing exercise in an attempt to try and find a partner for a CPO of the airport – a power given to local authorities to force the purchase of certain areas if it can be justified to be in the greater public interest.

It came after talks with US investment firm RiverOak failed to deliver a deal.

A Prior Information Notice (PIN) calling for expressions of interest was published on January 15, before five expressions of interest were made before the council's deadline of February 9.

The process then twiddled that down to three but all were then ruled unsuitable by a council panel comprising of the authority's chief executive, strategic procurement manager and director of corporate governance, who said: "Based on the assessment one can draw the conclusions that in terms of the key lines of enquiry, the market cannot deliver on the council's requirements; there is no established market which is able to deliver, or an adequate number of operators; the mar-



HOPES: Campaigners for the airport still maintain it will have a future in aviation

ket has no capacity to deliver the requirements and there is no cost or other benefits in taking this matter further."

Manston has been sold since it shut as an airport in 2014 to the team behind the Discovery Park in Sandwich who have outlined ambitious proposals to turn it into a major development site featuring residential, leisure and commercial development.

The council did receive interest from other parties, one of which is approaching the current owners to invest some £150m, subject

to a feasibility study showing that investment in the airport makes economic sense.

Dr Beau Webber, of the Save Manston Association (SMA), said: "This announcement is no surprise - no one who talked to their lawyers would try a to fund a CPO against a Development Consent Order (DCO) process in-progress with the National Planning Inspectorate."

Ukip lost its council majority after failing to deliver its pre-election promise to re-open the site as a functioning airport.

Ghostly addition to Dreamland line-up

MARGATE's Dreamland unveils another new ride this weekend – the Phantom Express.

The ghost train is a permanent addition to the park, which is gearing up for what it hopes will be a bumper season.

This weekend sees the launch of a special exhibition celebrating classic Only Fools and Horses episode the Jolly Boys' Outing.

■ Turn to pages 22-23 for full details.

Charity bike ride for the Pilgrims Hospice

DIVAS on Wheels, a charity bike raising funds for Pilgrims' Hospice, returns next month.

Organisers hope more than 400 women will turn up to take part in the event which stretches to either 25 or 50 miles and starts in Faversham.

The event takes place on June 12.

To register, go to www.pilgrimshospices.org.

Blunkett warning

FORMER home secretary David Blunkett says it would be "a calamity" if the UK's borders moved from Calais back to Kent as a result of a vote for Brexit in next month's EU referendum.

Lord Blunkett told supporters at a Labour In for Britain meeting in central London this week that "together we have power, individually we have little".

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'Brexit means more focus on local projects,' says minister

A GOVERNMENT minister says it is "essential" for Kent to vote to leave the European Union when the electorate takes to the polls on June 23.

Speaking ahead of a Vote Leave rally in Maidstone yesterday (Saturday), alongside fellow Tories Iain Duncan Smith and Canterbury MP Julian Brazier, employment minister Priti Patel told us why people across the county and beyond should vote in favour of a Brexit.

"We are being dictated to by those in Brussels and it's time for us to take back control," she said.

"It is essential for areas like Kent to have control of its borders so we can have an immigration policy that is suitable.

"The other factor at the heart of



this debate is the economy and we are better off leaving so we can trade with the rest of the world.

"The EU costs us £350m a week.

"We have been spoken to by remain campaigners as if we are

lowly people, but Kent benefits from voting to leave because the money saved means more focus can be put on UK priorities and the local projects that really matter to people."

Parents reunited with son after his disappearance

THE parents of a Sittingbourne roofer who vanished for six years have been reunited with their son.

Matthew Green, 32, disappeared from his home in May 2010 after saying he was going to visit friends in London for the weekend and never returned.

His parents, Pauline and Jim, were then told earlier this month that he was found alive and was refusing help and medicine at a psychiatric ward in Spain.

Human rights and data protection laws initially prevented them from making contact and they admitted that he may not want to come home.

However, with the help of ITV's This Morning, the couple were able to fly out to the psychiatric ward.

Mrs Green said: "He was walking towards us and I knew straight away it was Matt. I knew after six years that his appearance would change but I wasn't expecting that.

"We have had no contact whatsoever... and now we've got him."

She added that her son rejected her approach for a hug, claiming he didn't want to be touched.

"Hearing our voices was possibly the first English people that he has spoken to for a very long time," Mr Green said.

The parents had taken a bag of clothes and belongings for their son, which they said were gratefully received.

"He was rummaging through the bag like it was Christmas day," Mrs Green said.

Have a go in a canoe

NATIONAL Go Canoeing Week runs until June 5 - with the chance of taster sessions being held around the county.

Among them Canoe Wild on the Stour at Grove Ferry, near Canterbury, which will be giving people the chance to take to the waterways on canoes or paddleboards.

Widdy makes a return

FORMER Maidstone MP and government minister Ann Widdecombe is returning to the county on June 11 to entertain an audience at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood.

The event will be a fundraiser for the Heart of Kent Hospice and will feature anecdotes and opinions from her life in the spotlight.

Mayor's £26k farewell

HOSPICE charity ellenor has collected a cheque for £26,000 from the outgoing Tunbridge Wells mayor David Elliott.

It was the chosen charity during his one-year term in office and benefitted from a host of fundraising events.

The charity offers care to the terminally ill.

Museum's lottery win

WIDE Eyed Theatre has received £31,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a museum exhibition featuring east Kent's Smuggling stories, which is to be held at The Seaside Museum, Herne Bay Seaside museum.

The museum has an open day on Friday for the public to share smuggling tales.

Dr Seuss's THE CAT IN THE HAT
THU 2 - SAT 4 JUNE

THE BOWIE EXPERIENCE
WED 1 JUNE

GRAEME OF THRONES
SAT 4 JUNE

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Fury after city homes go to London borough

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A LEADING charity says the county's housing crisis is "a timebomb" after Canterbury became the latest area to suffer from a population overspill from London.

It comes after the London Borough of Redbridge this week won a bid for temporary accommodation at the Howe Barracks site on the outskirts of the city – some 60 miles from its council offices.

The move means 200 families from the capital will be housed over the summer, leaving local residents on Canterbury City Council's waiting list needing to wait that little bit longer for housing.

The authority claims it made its own "robust and comprehensive bid" but ultimately couldn't compete with the financial muscle of a London borough.

However, Mike Barrett, chief executive of the homeless charity Porchlight, admitted he feared for the future of the 2,500 Canterbury residents on the waiting list.

He told KoS: "It's very worrying for us because a number of families moving there will undoubtedly need a level of support and with services already strained, this potentially could be breaking point both in the district and county-wide.

"It involves Redbridge uprooting children and people with families with support networks in that borough, so it's not exactly an easy journey because Canterbury is a considerable distance from where their support is.

"For those still waiting in Canterbury, their situation deteriorates and you worry where the housing is going to come from – it's a timebomb.

"At one level the government talks about localism and devolution, then on another level it allows this to happen."

A total of 208 properties at the barracks were formerly used by the Ministry of Defence to house armed forces personnel and their families, but became available to lease in late 2015.

"I've no doubt the Canterbury bid was incredibly strong but obviously it would not have given the MoD the return it was looking for," Mr Barrett added.

"Austerity measures always have a knock-on effect and this is a perfect example of how it can be so damaging.

"London naturally has far greater resources than anywhere else so it's no surprise that Canterbury couldn't compete.

"Different parts of Kent will experience this as we go forward, I'm sure of that, because there's a massive shortage of housing.

"London is slightly more acute in that regard because of the cost of living that is pushing people not just out of the capital but beyond the Home Counties.

"The knock-on effect on our schools, health services and social services will be considerable.

"There has to be a change in law – Canterbury's hands were tied here and I'm sure other authorities will experience the same."

Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale has previously described Kent as a "dumping ground" for the population overspill, after plans for 12,000 homes in his constituency were given the green light last year.

Conservative leader of Kent County Council, Paul Carter, agreed that it could be a worrying sign of things to come.

"I have a number of serious con-



ANGRY: Canterbury council leader Simon Cook, top, and KCC leader Paul Carter were left fuming over the sale

cerns the tender has been won by the Redbridge and we have written to the chief executive asking for assurance that the families will not place additional burdens on public agencies, health, schools and social care as a result," he said.

"This could be the start of a significant flow of London boroughs, in their duty to provide homes for vulnerable families, placing families outside of London into the coastal areas of Kent and peripheral regions in the south east."

Vince Maple, leader of the Medway Labour group, felt the move was demonstrative of a wider housing issue, which is affecting families across the county.

"We have a housing crisis in this country which means we are seeing people forced out of areas which are lacking decent levels of affordable housing," he said.

"Councils are becoming increasingly desperate and are grabbing any private sector housing available to meet their statutory requirements.

"For three decades we have seen a lack of house building.

"We should be proud that people want to live here but it does mean families are being forced out because they can't afford these astronomical prices.

"There's 2,500 people waiting in Canterbury and 20,000 here in Medway, and part of the problem we have is the unregulated nature of private sector housing.

"Across Kent we see people having to put up with sub-standard housing and they are fearful because they the don't want to complain and risk being evicted."

"I'm disappointed to hear these developments," added Canterbury MP Julian Brazier.

"But unfortunately, Annington Homes [the private housing firm that North & West

owns the accommodation] is free to sell to whomever they want.

"Canterbury could have done with this housing far more than Redbridge so it's disappointing, but I hope we will be able to integrate those that do arrive."

The Catching Lives charity, which seeks to support the homeless, however, felt the homes on offer wouldn't be appropriate for many people in its care.

"The vast majority of our clients are single people, and if they are on the council list would only be entitled to bedsits or one bed flats," said chief executive, Terry Gore.

"All of the housing stock on the barracks are two and three bed houses which wouldn't be suitable or available to them.

"It is a shame that they won't be available to the many local families who are on Canterbury's housing register but this situation is more evidence of how dysfunctional our housing system is.

"The fate of this housing was decided by an effective bidding war between local authorities, rather than part of a considered, thought through plan of action to help with what is a national problem."

Simon Cook, leader of Canterbury City Council, expressed his disappointment when the move was announced earlier this week but said there was little his authority could have done to prevent it from happening.

"We did our utmost to try and get these properties for people on our waiting list because it would have made a difference to so many local families," he said.

"The law does allow councils to place people in districts outside of their own, but of course this severely restricts the ability of the councils in those other areas to provide adequate

and affordable housing for their own local people.

"We have explored the effective legal avenues open to us to prevent this from happening, but sadly there are none at present.

"The law allows councils to place people in districts outside of their own, provided they follow correct procedures.

"We will monitor this to ensure Redbridge follow due process and will take action if they fail to do so.

"The idea that a London borough can solve some of its housing problems by moving people miles away from friends and family in this way is very regrettable and we will be pushing the Local Government Association and other professional bodies to lobby for a change in legislation."

A spokesperson for Redbridge council blamed a "chronic shortage of affordable housing" for the move and insisted the pressure in the housing market made it difficult to secure enough local supply.

"The cost of renting and buying properties is pushing people to outer London boroughs including Redbridge and beyond," she said.

"This is not only a result of the escalating costs of rents in London, but also due to the loss of housing benefit subsidy, benefit cap and housing welfare reform.

"We currently have 21 households in Kent. We are continually seeking accommodation which is suitable for families and Canterbury is one of the options available to those families currently living in B&Bs.

"In common with other London boroughs we urgently need to address the affordable housing crisis and we are looking into various options to do this.

"This is one of Redbridge's top priorities and a key policy objective for the new Mayor of London."



SITE: The now empty Howe Barracks on outskirts of Canterbury

Could we eat our way out of the Japanese knotweed dilemma?

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

UTTER the words 'Japanese knotweed' to any green fingered horticulturalist and they'll shudder at the intrusive plant's ability to grow and overwhelm areas at record speeds.

But one local firm says the solution is simple – let's eat our way out of it.

Japanese knotweed is infamous for its fast growth and density which prevents other plants from flourishing. Estimates suggest, as a nation, we're paying up to £160m each year to tackle it.

But Ross Evans says rather than weed killer we should attack it with a spoon. And perhaps some custard.

He says the knotweed is in the same family as rhubarb and can be used in exactly the same way.

As manager of a wild food company called Forager Ltd, based in Chatham, near Canterbury, it supplies Britain's restaurants and the public with a host of unusual edibles.

He told us: "It's delicious and whilst in some areas it definitely presents a problem making it a part of our diet could be a significant part of the solution."

The knotweed arrived in the UK in the mid-19th century when Kew Gardens displayed it as an ornamental plant.

Since then, it has spread, and it knows how to spread fast.

A tiny carelessly discarded slice of the root can quickly take hold and under the right conditions a new colony of plants will spring up.

Explains Mr Evans: "The rapid spread of the plant is most likely as a result of soil containing root fragments being moved around the country making it a real issue along motorways and railway embankments where the soil is then used."

"Colonies and sites with which I am familiar have not actually increased in size over the past 10 years. Like any plant it needs suitable conditions to spread and colonise and there are limits to the kind of soil and habitat in which it will thrive."

For that reason, it is regarded as a weed that needs to be eradicated.

But to Mr Evans, it has obvious potential as a resource and a permanent answer is staring us in the face.

The professional forager said all that's needed it to make it delicious is to peel the fibrous, green and red outer skin of the branch and it will reveal a watery light green inner flesh with a soft flavour that crunches like apple as you eat it.

And don't stop there. Mr Evans said: "The young shoots are also great, almost similar to bamboo shoots."

There have been some increased warnings over the years that the knotweed problem is getting out of control with it springing up in fields, along verges and plaguing roadsides.

Mr Evans adds: "On the one hand Japanese knotweed can present a very significant problem but it's not completely black and white. The hollow stems which are left over the winter months provide an excellent habitat for over-wintering insects and, in some large colonies, studies have shown that they can become important habitats for reptiles and amphibians which feed on the abundance of insects."

"And that really goes for so many more plants that many regard as a pest."

"As a country we are surrounded by water which gives us an abundance of seaweed."

"Again, this is a great food and should be taken seriously, especially as populations increase and growing food in ever-limited space is causing even greater concerns."

"And yet, we are completely ignoring so many food sources."

Mr Evans said he works with many farmers in Kent who now welcome his team on to their land to forage for foods that the farmers regard as weeds.

He said: "It really is a win-win for the farmers. We go on to their land, remove what from their point of view are just weeds and we pay them for it."

"There has been so much talk about the over-use of herbicides, so this is one way of reducing the need to use so many chemicals."



SLICE: Apparently, if you slice the knotweed you get something like rhubarb or bamboo.

Wild garlic, purple dew plant, dulse, laver, hogweed seeds, are just some of massive range available online at Forager Wild Food.

He said: "There is so much out there that it is a shame it is not utilised to its full potential."

"While we are dealing primarily with vegetation, I am not saying you need to be a vegetarian to enjoy it."

Adding these things to foods that includes meat can take a healthy diet to new heights. Equally, the diversity of plants which we are introducing to people's diets allows for someone who is following a vegetarian or vegan diet to access a much greater range of nutrients than they would receive from the relatively small number of species offered by the current agricultural model."

A 2010 study by the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences found Japanese knotweed costs the UK economy £166 million per year, with almost £11 million spent on battling the plant along road networks and waterways alone.

The super-tough plant can burst through concrete, damage foundations and can only be disposed off at special sites.

Mr Evans said: "I'm sure that a certain amount of controlling the spread of the plant could be achieved by harvesting and eating it. It's not going to completely get rid of it but it will make a contribution."

"Ironically, one of the current control methods being explored is to introduce a bug from Japan which feeds

on the knotweed and could therefore weaken the plants – rather than import a non-native insect as a control method we should eat it ourselves."

Estimates say getting rid of it costs around £1,000 per square foot because so many rules have to be followed as laid down by the Environment Agency.

The Royal Horticultural Society said its eradication had added an extra £70m to the cost of developing the site of London's 2012 Olympics.

Mr Evans said: "There is now an increasing number of London chefs who will use it in their dishes."

One of them is Pavel Kanja, head chef at west London fine dining restaurant Flat Three, who said some diners are confused when they see it on a menu, knowing it is regarded as a weed. But are hooked once they taste it – he uses it with beef and a syrup for a Champagne cocktail.

Mr Evans said: "The knotweed is a great example of turning rubbish in to gold."

■ If you want to know more about what you can eat in the countryside, visit <http://www.forager.org.uk/>





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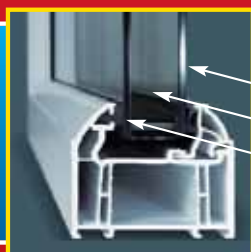
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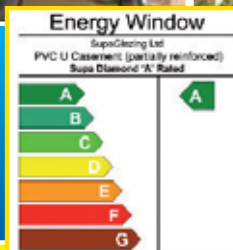
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NHS chief's pay comments spark backlash



When the chief executives of one of the county's major NHS trusts said we should at least consider contributing to health costs, the furious response has led for calls for her to quit. But does she, in fact, actually have a fair point?

By Tom Pyman & Simon Allin

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COMMENTS made by a Kent health chief suggesting that free healthcare on the NHS may no longer be viable have led to calls for her resignation.

Speaking on BBC Radio Four last week, Dartford and Gravesend NHS Trust's chief executive, Susan Acott, questioned the core NHS principle of universal healthcare free at the point of use after it was revealed the health service overspent its budget by a record £2.45 billion in 2015-16.

In relation to charging for care, she told the programme: "I think it's something modern countries need to consider. Because we have our cherished NHS, I don't think that should prevent sensible and intelligent discussions around whether free at the point of use is always the right thing to do.

"If you look at examples like dentistry and ophthalmology we often contribute. So I certainly think it's a question that needs to be asked."

In response, a number of health experts from across the county have slammed the comments, and reinforced their support for a free NHS.

Dr Paul Hobday, a GP and prominent political campaigner who has more than 30 years' experience working in Kent, told KoS: "She should resign.

"We need managers who will whistleblow and stand up to the government.

"She is speaking out of line, when she is supposed to be managing the health service. Managers should be fighting for more resources from central taxation."

Dr Hobday, who is a member of the National Health Action Party, believes the government wishes to replace the NHS with a US-style insurance-based system, and he accused CEOs such as Ms Acott of 'softening up' the public to eventual privatisation.

"A lot of CEOs are in place because they have toed the government line," he said.

"Those who are in key positions are the ones who are keen to implement the government's plans.

"They are in post to carry out government

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CONTROVERSY:

Health trust boss Susan Acott asked if we should have to pay for our medical care



policy, but on the other hand the health secretary is saying people should whistleblow. These are the people who should be whistleblowing.

"It is a political choice, health, and we do not overspend. We are spending less than many other developed countries – even Greece.

"I think the whole of the general public should be standing up and saying 'why are the government not prepared to spend a reasonable amount on health-care?'"

Dr Hobday claimed higher taxes would not necessarily have to be introduced to close the funding gap and pointed out that the NHS wastes money by tendering contracts to private providers.

"Between five and ten billion pounds is wasted on running the market. By abolishing the market they could put the extra money into front-line services," he said.

"It is a waste of money running a competitive system – and by asking us to consider charging patients, she is asking for the abolition of the NHS."

Labour councillor Mike Eddy, who sits on Kent County Council's health overview and scrutiny committee stopped short of calling for Mrs Acott to step down, but did reveal a number of concerns.

He told KoS: "These comments are unprincipled.

"There are certain parts of the health service that charge, such as dentistry and opticians, but these are long-standing arrangements.

"Such comments are extremely ill-advised and I would hope there would be a further explanation if not a retraction.

"There is a financial crisis throughout the NHS and it's made worse by the government trying to get doctors to work 24/7 when there aren't the doctors to go around.

"I can understand why a chief executive who is placed in an invidious position by this government policy is desperately trying to find a way of getting more money back into the system.

"But charging patients who need treatment is not the best way to go about it.

"It might be appropriate in the US, but then only the rich can afford treatment.

"You do worry if you start charging there's a danger of a return to the days of 1945 when poor people died

in agony and the rich might have had a bit more comfort."

Helen Whately, MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, agreed that it could set a dangerous precedent, but also steered clear of calling for Mrs Acott's head.

"I don't think that's a conversation we need to be having because there's so much that can be done differently to help the NHS cope with increasing demand," she said.

"As a country we will need to talk about whether we need to spend a larger amount of our GDP on health care, and do we do that through the tax payer or by people paying for their own care.

"We don't want to go in the direction of America because the NHS is a service admired and envied around the world.

"The most important thing is for patients to get high quality care when they need it.

"Hospitals are trying to recruit more nurses to make sure there are enough on the wards which is tricky because the demand has gone up quicker than it takes to train them."

Cllr Eddy admitted he was fearful of the growing similarities between the evolution of the NHS and the health service in the US.

"I think the government is doing all it can to privatise as much of the service as possible and that is detrimental to patients.

"The bodies which deliver these services are looking for profits and bonuses for their bosses.

"You then get situations where private sector companies come in having looked at the accounts and think they can do it for cheaper.

"If you're prioritising the patient, privatisation just doesn't work."

Such privatisation appears impossible to get away from, after a £126m contract to provide services in north Kent was controversially awarded to Richard Branson's Virgin Care earlier this year.

A number of health chiefs slammed the decision when it was announced in January, and a legal challenge was made by the Kent Community Health Foundation Trust to suspend the contract over fears Virgin would be unable to deliver its services in time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

During the row, the Department of Health confirmed that legally, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) should make decisions on who should provide services based on the quality and value of the service offer, not price.

Ken Rogers, lead governor of the Kent Community Health Foundation Trust, was one of those opposed to the Virgin Care deal, and also felt bringing universally free healthcare to an end would be to the country's detriment.

"I think it was probably something that was said off-the-cuff because of the difficult situation she is in," he said.

"I don't think charging patients is a road we want to go down and it was most likely simply a way of telling the government we need more money.

"Everybody agrees that patients are living longer and there are more complex medical issues that we are now aware of, so perhaps it is the case that financially we have not kept up with these innovations.

"There's always pressure to make savings and I agree with that principle, but in the 21st century we shouldn't be considering charging patients for healthcare.

"The long term concern, though, is not just about money, it's the shortage of doctors and nurses available because of how long it takes to train them."

Tory MP for Dartford Gareth Johnson added: "I have no difficulty with discussing NHS funding issues to see where improvements can be made but we must never get to the stage where people are unwilling to seek



medical treatment because they cannot afford it.

"The strength of the NHS is the principle of being free at the point of delivery and that should not change.

"The NHS ensures there is no need for sick people to sit at home as they can't afford to be ill."

Some health trusts and CCGs in Kent have been forced to look overseas in order to help ease the strain on services in the county.

Last month, Timothy Brierley, a civil servant from Lyminge, near Folkestone, made history as he travelled across the Channel to undergo a standard gall bladder removal procedure and become the first British pa-

tient to be treated in Calais on the NHS.

The surgery was performed following the signing of a contract in January between Centre Hospitalier de Calais and the South Kent Coast CCG after the hospital made a bid to provide services at the end of last year.

The decision – taken to help cut down waiting times for patients which currently stand at several months due to overwhelming demand – was slammed by the trade union, Unison, which described the move as "barking", but Mr Brierley said the experience was "completely stress-free" and encouraged others to follow suit.

Similarly, Medway CCG announced that it was considering drafting in doctors and nurses from France to help ease crippling demand in the district and beyond.

However, a spokesperson insisted discussions were at a preliminary stage, no decisions had been definitively made, and that the use of clinical staff from across the Channel was only one of a number of options currently being discussed.

"Bringing in doctors and nurses has been a long-standing process to provide cover when we have problems," Cllr Eddy said.

"We are lucky to be part of the EU in this instance but doctors have got



very easy movement and similarly, being able to use hospitals in France or Italy, for example, and receive free treatment is beneficial for patients when on holiday.

"I support using everything that is available, so if you can have a procedure in Calais, and you're willing to travel, that's fine, but I'd prefer doctors are travelling over here than vice-versa."

Mrs Whately disagreed: "Having to recruit from overseas is not the right thing to do in the long-term."

"We're in the process of freeing up universities to help them offer more nursing degrees, but these are controversial because they won't be given bursaries.

"But we hope this drive will help increase the number of nurses trained in the country in the long-term."

The respective chief executives of the Medway, East Kent and Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells trusts declined to comment, and despite persistent attempts, Mrs Acott was also unavailable for further comment.

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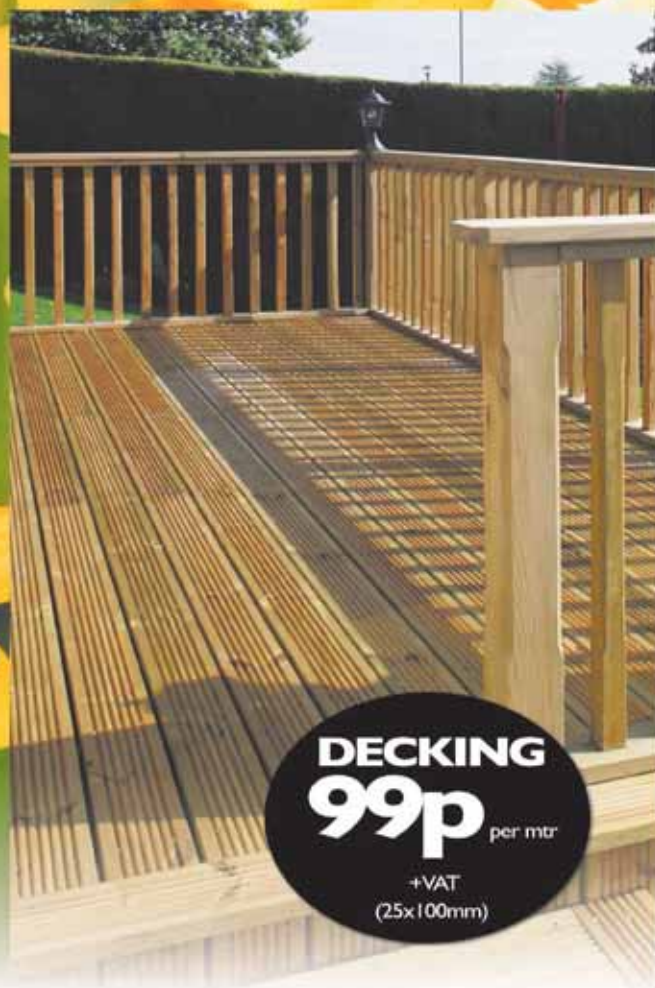


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PROJECT: The now completed Broomhill Sands defences will protect both homes and businesses

Romney Marsh defence project has 'proved government wrong'

The Defend Our Coast Association is celebrating after a 12-year campaign finally came to an end this month when work on a £30m coastal defence scheme at the Lydd Ranges was officially completed...

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A CAMPAIGN group that has helped deliver much-needed coastal defences in Lydd says it has "proved the government wrong" in its victory.

The Defend Our Coast Association (DOC) was set up by local people living on the Romney Marsh in 2004, following what they believed was a lack of community involvement by government agencies during sea defence policy planning.

Gradually gaining more and more support over the years, it pushed the Environment Agency to invest in reinforcements and earlier this month, a £30m defence scheme that will protect thousands of homes and businesses between the Lydd Ranges and The Suttons in Camber, Sussex, was finally completed.

Brigitte Bass, of the DOC, told KoS of the work the association has done over the last decade and beyond to help deliver essential protection.

"It has been a long haul but obviously we're delighted to finally arrive here," she said.

"We realised that houses, including mine, were going to be in danger of being swallowed up by the sea, so we got together and formed a group so that people could have their say.

"Not many people realise that if you lose your home to coastal flooding, you get no compensation whatsoever.

"You can't just protect bits here and there, you need protection for the whole of Romney Marsh.

"Here we are, 12 years later, and we've nearly done it, but until the final piece is completed, the marsh won't be safe."

The scheme is part of the bigger Folkestone to Cliff End Strategy which, once complete, will protect 14,500 homes and businesses, a nuclear power station, significant areas of designated habitat and two Ministry of Defence firing ranges.

The Lydd defences, known as the Broomhill Sands scheme, covers over 2km of beach and is made up of new rock revetments shipped in from Norway, a new wave wall, increased beach shingle and new timber groynes.

In addition to improved coastal protection, the new defences provide a wider path along the top of the defence and new pedestrian access steps and ramps down to the beach, providing protection to more than 1,300 homes and 100 businesses.

The huge defence has significantly increased the standard of protection to the area from one in 20 years to one in 200 years, taking into account predicted sea level rises.

However, Ms Bass admitted it was far from an easy fight and the project was only delivered through the sheer bloody-mindedness of those involved in the campaign.

"There's a real community involvement in this and because of that I'm very proud.

"The need for local people to have a

say is common sense but it was not how government used to work then.

"We have to have so much enthusiasm and desire just to be on a level playing field with the big boys.

"It took a lot of hard work, a lot of lobbying and many trips to Westminster but it's paid off.

"When a group like us comes together, I think government sits back and waits for them to run out of funding or just burn out - but we've proved them very much wrong.

"Most people don't realise that the government does not have any legal obligation to maintain or build sea defences - they buy a house on the coast and think they'll be looked after.

"Money isn't often spent here, it goes to more densely populated areas so for this to come to fruition is a real victory for us.

Ms Bass was full of praise for the support of Shepway MP Damian Collins, without whom, she said, "we would not be where we are today".

Mr Collins, who was in attendance at the official opening on Friday, said: "The campaign has done extremely well having been there from the beginning and been an important driver throughout the whole process.

"They've demonstrated what the strength of local feeling for the need to invest in projects such as these can achieve and there's been a tremen-

dous amount of community support and engagement.

"It's great to see the project being completed because this type of infrastructure is really well designed and built in a way that truly enhances the area.

"What we are looking at is an intelligent defence strategy for the whole coast and Broomhill Sands is a really important piece of the jigsaw."

The Environment Agency's operations manager Ian Nunn said: "This project has been one of the largest construction projects the Environment Agency has ever completed in the south east.

"We sourced materials from



SUCCESS: The project was completed 12 years after campaigning began

throughout Europe and staff, designers and contractors from across the country.

"Over 250,000 tonnes of rock will absorb wave energy and protect the new defence itself.

"The defence is nicely finished with a series of sculptures, created using funding from the Arts Council England."

The government says it is continuing to work closely with Natural England to complete the remaining schemes from the Folkestone to Cliff End Strategy.

Last month thousands of homeowners received a boost as a world-first flood insurance scheme was given the green light, benefitting residents across the county.

The Flood Re scheme was launched, which requires all companies who provide home insurance in the UK to put around £180m into a central pot.

Insurers can then place their policies with the Flood Re scheme which means that claims for flood damage

to homes are paid for out of the Flood Re pot.

The benefit to homeowners is insurance companies will be able to offer flood insurance at a more affordable price and the excess on claims should be significantly reduced following the introduction of a £250 limit.

Previously, excess levels were set so high it was costing thousands to capitalise on a policy.

The cost will ultimately fall on ordinary policy-holders, who are likely to have to pay an extra £10.50 on their premiums on average.

However, houses built since 2009 will not be covered by the scheme to discourage developers from building on land at risk of flooding.

Officials in the previously-affected areas of Maidstone and Yalding told us they full supported the principle of the scheme but only if it didn't act as a distraction from the more pressing demand for enhanced flood defences.



DEFENCE: The new sea wall will protect homes and businesses

£90M BOOST FOR COASTAL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

THE completion of the work on the Broomhill Sands project tied in with a government announcement this week that a £90m pot of cash was available for creative entrepreneurs across the country's coastline.

Community groups and businesses in Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Margate, Folkestone, Dover and more are being invited to bid for a share of the investment which was released on Monday.

The funding is available throughout the UK over the next four years to support plans to reel in jobs and revitalise much-loved seaside areas which historically have been hotspots for tourism.

Since 2012, the government has invested over £120m in seaside areas through a dedicated Coastal Communities Fund, and analysis has shown it to be money well spent with every £1 invested having the potential to create an up to £8 boost to coastal economies.

As well as publicly-funded schemes like Broomhill Sands, there has also been an upward curve of private investment in the county, with Folkestone in particular benefitting from a number of projects backed by the Sir Roger De Haan Charitable Trust.

Meanwhile last week saw the announcement that Kent boasted the most Blue Flag beaches in the UK - up to eleven from nine in 2014, after meeting the highest standards for cleanliness, facilities and water quality set by Keep Britain Tidy.



Jo James, chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, felt a combination of these factors was an indication that Kent's coastline could once again be a booming business.

She told KoS: "Any potential money that we can get to build on our local tourism is good because it gives businesses the opportunity to boost the local economy.

"It further builds on last week's Blue Flag success, and proves that east Kent seems to be experiencing a rise back to its heyday.

"Many years ago it was a thriving place of tourism, with people from London wanting to come down, but over the years it lost that a little bit.

"Now, though, there's starting to be a revival, as demonstrated by the Turner [Contemporary art gallery in Margate], which we can tap into."

Communities secretary, and MP for Tunbridge Wells, Greg Clark (pictured) said following the release of the £90m cash earlier this week: "Our Great British coast has enormous economic potential and we are determined to see it thrive all year round.

"That's why today we're investing £90m in exciting new business ideas across our much-loved seaside areas - bringing not just a wave of enthusiasm but also creating thousands of good new jobs too.

"And with grants of up to £4m each available, I'd urge our coastal entrepreneurs and communities to get involved."

Communities minister Mark Francois, who last week visited Medway, and discussed plans for a new stadium for Gillingham Football Club, said: "Over the past few years we've seen a sea-change in investment across our Great British Coast - with today's £90m building on the £120m we've already pumped in.

"This money is all about generating jobs and boosting businesses, so if you've got a good idea we want to hear from you.

"We're rightly proud of our country's seaside past but this new money means that we can also look forward to its bright future."

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WIN! Tickets for incredible night out at Leeds Castle

The annual Leeds Castle Classical Concert takes place on July 9 and you can win a pair of tickets in our contest

THE Leeds Castle Classical Concert is one of the standouts of the county's cultural calendar and demand for tickets for this summer's show has once again been immense.

And now you could be there for free thanks to our great competition.

Now in its 38th year, the concert is set against the stunning backdrop of Leeds Castle. For the first time, Aled Jones MBE will be hosting the event in front of an audience of thousands on Saturday, July 9.

It will be a truly memorable evening of flag-waving, singing and dancing, with an opening performance from The Definitive Rat Pack, entertain-

ment from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by John Rigby and with renowned soloists. Special guests include the P&O Ferries Choir.

Hold onto your flags and hats and be wowed with an air display by Aero Legends as the jaw-dropping 1940's Spitfire takes to the skies.

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We have four pairs of tickets to give away – normally £43 each.

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But don't worry if you miss out - tickets and more information can be found at www.leedscastleconcert.co.uk.



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- A. Aled Jones
- B. Graham Norton
- C. Jonathan Ross

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and postcode to 67000, e.g. KENT CLASSICAL C JOHN SMITH 2 THE STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT. Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final. Usual terms and conditions apply. Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of Tuesday, June 7, 2016, your entry will not be valid, but you still may be charged.

Texts cost your standard network rate, SMS Services are provided by Text Local. Helpline: 01244 752299. Alternatively enter by post to Leeds Castle Classical Concert Competition, Archant KOS Media, Suite 104 Kent House, Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PP, including your answer, name, address, postcode and contact telephone number.

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Remembering when ★ Only Fools & Horses ★ had Jolly Boys' Outing

Original stars of the show will be welcoming visitors this weekend at a special exhibition celebrating the TV comedy at Margate's Dreamland – location of a famous episode

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

IT was one of the most enduring episodes of one of the nation's best-loved comedies – and this weekend Margate will once again welcome back Only Fools and Horses.

Some 27 years ago, the stars of the BBC show descended on the seaside town to film the 1989 Christmas special – the Jolly Boys' Outing.

In it, Del, Rodney and Uncle Albert were joined by almost the entire supporting ensemble – including the likes of Trigger and Boycie – as the Peckham lads had a day-trip to the coast with the inevitable hilarious outcome (see box).

And as the photographs on these



pages show, the sun shone as the cast visited Dreamland – then Bem Bom Brothers – and shot scenes on the beach, outside the station and along the amusements.

Starting this weekend, a very special exhibition celebrating the TV show will be staged at Margate's Dreamland – with those turning up over the long bank holiday weekend



REVEALED: Behind the scenes pictures revealed this week capture stars David Jason (Del), Nicholas Lyndhurst (Rodney) and Buster Merryfield (Uncle Albert) during filming of the Jolly Boys' Outing, the 1989 Christmas special of the hugely popular BBC comedy

also getting the chance to meet with two stars of the show.

Both John Challis, who played Boycie, and his on-screen wife, Sue Holderness, who played Marlene, will be at

the event which takes fans back to a time when a yellow Robin Reliant meant Trotters Independent Traders were in town.

The exhibition will feature props

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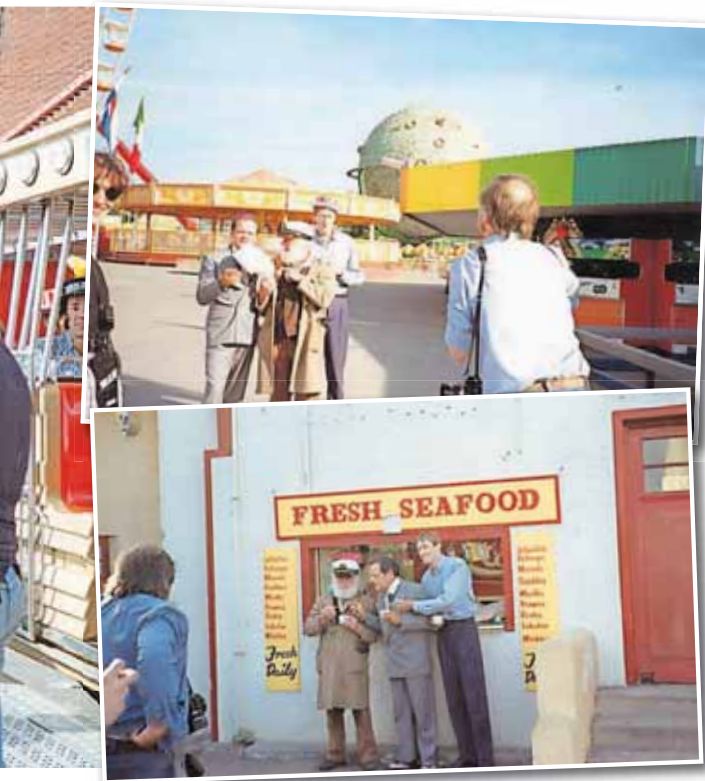
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and costumes from the show – including the famous Batman and Robin outfits Del and Rodney wore for the 1996 Christmas special.

The Jolly Boys Exhibition, which also includes a re-creation of the Trotters' Peckham flat, starts this Saturday, May 28, and runs until June 5.

A spokeswoman for Dreamland

said: "The response for tickets has proved very strong and there's been a great deal of interest. Only Fools and Horses is a much-loved show and we're looking forward to welcoming fans here."

Tickets for the exhibition in the ballroom at Dreamland, can be bought in advance for £4.95 or for £6.95 on the door.



EXHIBITION: Fans are set to flock to Dreamland to see the original props and sets from the TV hit.

THE EPISODE

IT was rare for Only Fools and Horses to be filmed so much on location, but for the longer Christmas specials a trip to Margate was the perfect setting for a classic episode.

For the likes of Del Boy, Rodney and Uncle Albert the August Bank Holiday meant just one thing - the Jolly Boys' Outing. For the regulars of the Nag's Head, it was a chance to take to a coach and head for the sea air, jellied eels and fairground rides of Kent's tourist hotspot.

The cast were filmed driving

down to the Kent coast - stopping off enroute at what was once the Roman Galley pub on the Thanet Way, near Herne Bay. It has long since been converted into housing.

There the gang took in a few early drinks only for the bus driver to have one too many and then be unable to drive - much to the dismay of Denzel who is drafted in as his replacement.

The coach then explodes after one of Del's dodgy car stereos overheats - a scene shot in a car park in Cliftonville.

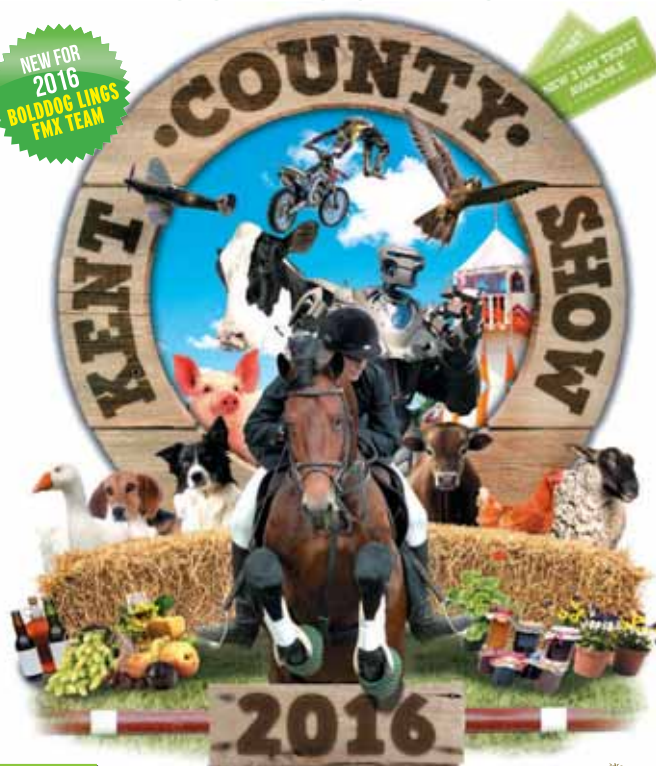
After a day in Margate of riding the rollercoaster - and memorably the Mary Rose ship - at Dreamland, the gang discover that as they arrive at Margate station, a rail strike means there is no ride home and they are stuck in the town.

Scattering to try and find rooms on one of the busiest days of the summer, Del and Rodney end up at a hotel, scenes of which were shot in Dolby Square, Cliftonville.

Millions tuned in to watch the episode and it remains one of the show's best-loved outings.

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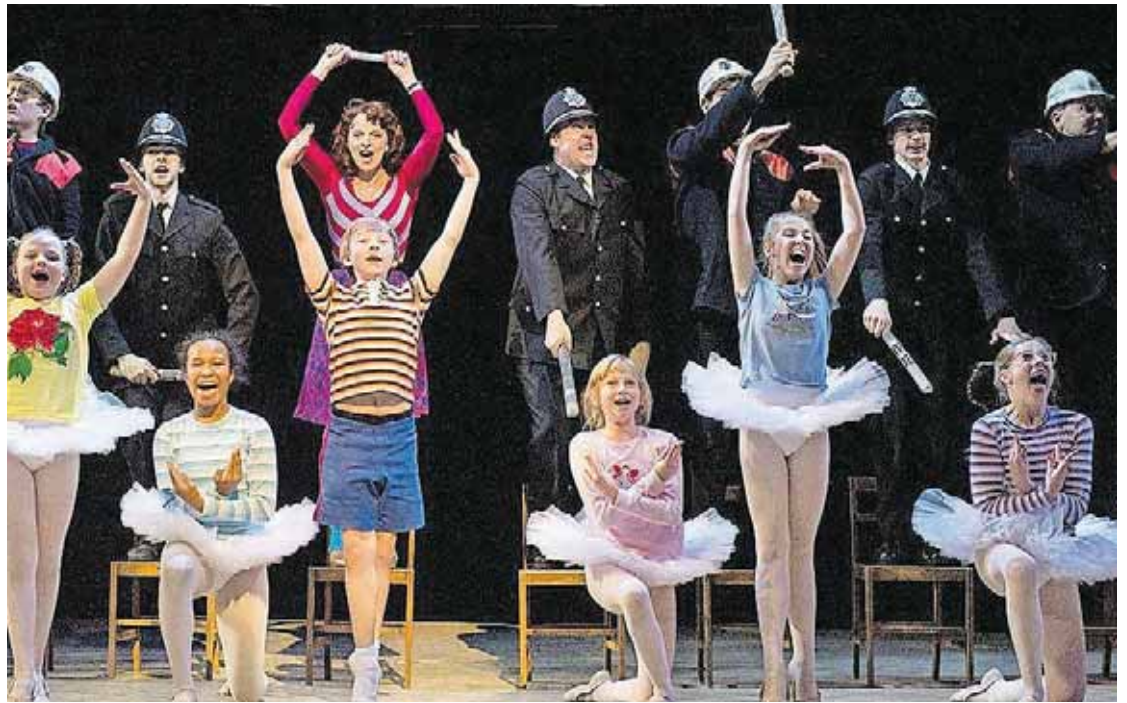
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CHALLENGE: Jessica Wright, left, and far right front in Billy Elliott, is seeking a generous donor to help her remarkable return from illness see her finally achieve her dream

After fighting illness, now talent has seen dream derailed by cash

Tom Pyman looks at how a teenager cannot fulfil her potential due to a glitch in government funding

ADARTFORD dancing prodigy who battled a debilitating illness when she was younger is facing the prospect of missing out on her dream career due to bizarre allowances about funding.

Jessica Wright, 18, overcame a rare condition to secure a place at one of the country's top performing arts colleges, but her ability to take up the offer is now in jeopardy.

Her application to Laine Theatre Arts in Epsom, Surrey, earlier this year was successful, but with fees of over £17,000 a year, plus living costs, Miss Wright is struggling to generate enough cash to follow her dream.

While most of her friends will apply for university degrees, and receive full support in paying tuition fees via the government's student loan scheme, Miss Wright is stuck in limbo.

The government announced recently that it was bringing the age of eligibility for its Advanced Learner Loan - used to support students on courses such as the musical theatre one she hopes to feature on - down to 19 from 24.

However, like many others, Miss Wright will still only be 18 when she finishes her A Levels this summer and will therefore not be able to apply for a grant.

"It's really difficult because I see my friends getting five university offers, they've written their personal statements and everything seems to be in place," she told KoS.

"But when you've worked really

hard to do so many auditions and then finally get a place, only to face the prospect of not getting in because it's so expensive, it's really frustrating.

"The worst bit is that it's that which is stopping me, rather than myself.

"The qualification I'd be getting is one of the highest standard - it's no less prestigious than a top degree - but the same kind of funding is not available and it's infuriating."

Miss Wright's ability or experience is not in question, having featured in Billy Elliott: The Musical at London's West End Victoria Palace Theatre among a number of other performing roles.

However, an admissions officer at Laine told us stories like Miss Wright's are far from uncommon.

"This is the first time they have lowered the age to 19 but it is strange that it is not also available to 18-year-olds," she said.

"We've had hundreds of applicants in a similar position to Jessica and there don't appear to be any other grants available.

"There are career development loans able to be accessed by banks, but for these students they're of no use because they offer them for a maximum of two years, including the year of graduation, and our course is three years long.

"We are supported by the Council for Dance Education and Training which has been lobbying hard to further reduce the age of the Advanced Learner Loan.

"But until then they are having to

"As parents it's awful having to watch her struggle. She has come back from her illness and absolutely worked her socks off - getting up at 6am every day to practice dancing on top of her A Levels"

Julie Wright,
Mother of 18-year-old Jessica

rely on private sponsorship and there's of course not an awful lot of that out there."

But Miss Wright is a young girl well-equipped for a fight, after coming down with an unusual kidney disorder known as Nutcracker Syndrome in 2013 which left her unable to dance for two years.

This is the compression of the left renal vein between the aorta and the superior mesenteric artery, which results in elevated pressure and collateral vein development.

After weeks of meetings with puzzled doctors, Miss Wright was finally diagnosed and underwent surgery to have her kidney removed and re-attached again with the affected blood vessels untangled.

"I started getting a pain in my back and stomach and I thought I'd just

pulled a muscle or something, but it persisted and that indicated that something was wrong," she said.

"I went to hospital and they struggled to find out the problem was because it's so rare and a lot of doctors aren't educated on it or don't even know it exists.

"It was quite a long time until they found out exactly what it was when I was referred to St Thomas' and a consultant who knew what it was and recommended surgery.

"There I had a vein reimplantation which involved them taking out the squashed part, untangling it and reattaching it.

"Ultimately I couldn't dance for two years due to various pains whenever I exercised or increased blood flow so had to begin considering other career options.

"Having been in and out of hospital and meetings with medical professionals I thought that could have been an option and started looking at neuropsychology and occupational therapy.

"But it wasn't until I started writing personal statements for university that I realised dancing was what I really wanted, so I worked hard to get back into a position where I could do that.

"You have to make sure you are doing what you really love because it's such a big investment and it's just not worth it otherwise."

Miss Wright defied the odds to receive an offer from Laine which has an exceptionally small intake of just 70 students but its pricey fees are

threatening to be too much of an obstacle.

Most students have to rely on wealthy parents or private sponsorship to afford the fees.

She has been saving her wages from a part time job at a jewellers in Bluewater, but with a total of some £75,000 probably needed, that may prove to be little more than a drop in the ocean.

Mum, Julie, has supported her daughter as much as she can and, along with her husband, last week tried to help raise money by performing a small gig in front of friends and family at the Conservative Club in Dartford.

Like most parents, funding a three-year training course on top of allowances for food and accommodation is just not possible.

"As parents it's awful having to watch her struggle," Mrs Wright said. "She has come back from her illness and absolutely worked her socks off - getting up at 6am every day to practice dancing as well as working part time on top of her A Levels.

"There's just this black hole where people are falling down because there's no support available between 18 and 19 and it's not acceptable."

As well as writing to various businesses in the hope of securing private sponsorship, Miss Wright has set up a crowdfunding page, and those wishing to donate can do so at bit.ly/1Vjuc7a.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills was unavailable for comment when we went to press.

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Dr Pieter Claassen of Hanover House, a local dental clinic is experiencing high demand for dental implants due to an advanced technique called PRGF which they offer to patients that are having dental implants.

This new system encourages healing at an accelerated rate which means patients are able to go about their normal, everyday life without any or very little down-time.

Patients travel from all over, demanding this unique treatment which is also being used to help sportsmen and women speed up the healing process following injury. PRGF stands for Plasma Rich Growth Factors, - referred to as accelerated healing by the Hanover House dental implant team.

The Problem

If you are one of the thousands of people suffering from missing or painful teeth you do not need to be reminded that it is very likely you will experience any or all of the following problems.

- Not being able to eat what you want
- Having to use fixative several times a day which is difficult to remove from your denture
- Your confidence has dropped
- You don't enjoy food anymore because of the denture covering the roof of your mouth
- You find yourself talking with your hand in front of your mouth to either stop a loose denture from moving or to hide an embarrassing gap



Pieter Claassen - Implant Dentist at Hanover House Dental in Tonbridge

- When did you last smile?
- You have bone loss where the denture is pressing on underlying bone
- You can often hear a 'funny sound' when the denture chews against another denture or teeth
- You have as constant fear you will lose or break your dentures
- Dogs love chewing dentures that lie unattended.

The excitement

For most of us suffering from ill-fitting denture, painful or loose teeth, all of the problems can be eliminated through the use of dental implants.

Dr Claassen says, "Most patients normally have dental implants to stabilise loose and uncomfortable dentures or to replace embarrassing missing teeth. Having fixed teeth again means that they can eat and enjoy the food they want and have the confidence to smile in family photos again."

PRGF is 100% Natural

The system is the magic solution that helps to speed up the healing process after the procedure, promoting our own unique healing factors to burst into action. Using the revolutionary PRGF system also increases the success rate.

For the first time ever Hanover House Dental Practice are offering the PRGF system completely free of charge when a dental implant is placed. Normally this amazing new treatment would cost £350.00 but for a limited period only Dr Claassen is offering it for FREE!

Clinical Results

In a study of 1391 dental implant placements using PRGF, the success rate was 99.6%. This shows just how special PRGF is, and as our free introductory gift to you, Dr Claassen wants to provide it free of charge - but not for long. In fact, you only have until Tuesday 14th June 2016 to take up this offer!

Patients who have osteoporosis often receive medication to strengthen their bones. Unfortunately, in some cases it can lead to the opposite - impaired healing of bone structure. PRGF is excellent for patients potentially at risk

of dental implant failure, shortening the time it takes for the body to accept your implants.

The Benefits

There are many benefits when a patient chooses to have dental implants and using the PRGF system only increases those benefits...

Below are just a few;

1. Faster healing time; Less down time
2. Reduced pain and swelling
3. No one will know unless you want them too!
4. Natural healing from your healing factors
5. Get back your quality of life

How it works

PRGF - Plasma Rich Growth Factor is a 100% natural product specific and unique to each patient. A small amount of blood is placed in a centrifuge and separated in different layers. Only the parts, rich in growth factors are then used and applied onto the implant and the surrounding areas in the mouth.

In the several years PRGF have been used in different medical fields there has never been a reported side effect.

What people say

"Pieter worked painstakingly to achieve the perfect finish. The dental implants have given me back my smile and confidence and I no longer have to worry about what I eat"

Mrs. P. Mahoney - Speldhurst

"Having dental implants was well worth the effort and the difference was extraordinary, making it the best decision I ever made. I used to be self-conscious about my teeth. I wouldn't eat in public in case my dentures fell out and I hated how they felt in my mouth. Since having dental implants I am so much happier. I can eat what I want, when I want, including apples and I am much more confident. Even my friends have commented on how happy and relaxed I look."

Stephen Barnham - Tonbridge

Ken, a patients of Dr Claassen at Hanover House Dental Practice says... *"I wasn't certain about going down this route but now feel SMILES better!"* which is evident in his before and after treatment photos.



■ Mr Ken Winch BEFORE Treatment



■ Mr Ken Winch AFTER Treatment

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SEE PAGE 34

Five tips for those adding a garden shed to their space



SEE PAGE 36

Ways to create your dream look in the bathroom



Homes & Gardens

Making improvements for summer

Read through our latest supplement for advice on garden sheds and ways that you can get your ideal bathroom

WELCOME to our latest edition of Homes and Gardens. Spring is now well underway and many of us have been enjoying the lighter mornings and evenings and warmer weather.

With summer approaching, now might be the time to make changes.

With a Bank Holiday weekend meaning that a large number of people will have an extra day off on Monday, what better time is there for keen gardeners to make their way into their outdoor space and indulge in their hobby?

It also provides you with a chance to carry out some DIY around your home, or to revamp some of the areas that you want to improve.

With summer on the way, a garden shed can be a great addition to your outdoor space – with a number of purposes that they are suitable for.

In this edition we will be providing you with advice on garden sheds – featuring a number of tips for those

looking to add one in to their outdoor space or to improve the one that they already have.

With spring being a good time to sell your home, we will be looking at the ways in which you can improve your garden in order to add value to your property and attract potential buyers.

■ Turn over to pages 32 and 33 to find out more.

We will also be examining ways in which you can get your dream bathroom – with tips on wallpaper and bathroom accessories and advice from a number of design experts.

■ Turn to pages 34 and 35 to read more about this.

What's more, we will be running a competition and we are looking for nominations from people around the county.

■ To find out more about this, turn over to pages 36 to 38.

We hope that you enjoy this supplement and the Bank Holiday weekend.

Continues over page



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Offering some tips on garden sheds

By Julia Gray

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

With the weather getting warmer, many people will be pleased to have the opportunity to get out into the garden.

With summer on the way, now could be the perfect time to instal a garden shed, or give your existing one a revamp.

For those planning to carrying out some DIY in the coming weeks, here are five top tips about garden sheds that can help.

1. Garden sheds are usually either wooden or metal. The metal ones are often easier and quicker to build and, unlike wood, need little maintenance.

They're more resistant to fire, rodents and insects than wooden ones, although can be less able to withstand storms and high winds, are noisy when it's raining and are hot inside during summer and cold in winter.

2. Wooden sheds generally look more attractive and, because they're made from a natural material, blend into the garden better. If you're not keen on a natural look, it's easy to jazz them up.

Garden wood paints, such as the Cuprinol Garden Shades range (currently on offer at B&Q, two 2.5ltr tins for £30), come in lots of different col-



ours these days, so there's something for everyone.

Stripes, for example, create a beach-hut effect, while creamy yellows and pastel greens and blues are perfect for a pretty pop of colour that's not too jarring. Unless they're pre-treated, wooden sheds should first be treated with wood preserver.

Aesthetics aside, applying garden-wood paint or stain should also help prolong the life of the shed, as will maintaining it from time to time.

3. Your shed will need a

firm base, typically a concrete slab. Wooden sheds should come with a floor, whereas metal sheds usually have the concrete base as the floor.

It's certainly possible to lay the base and build the shed yourself if you're an experienced and competent DIYer.

An easier option would be to get a landscape gardener or builder to do it, although this can be expensive, especially with a large shed.

You may be able to pay extra for the manufacturer to erect the shed when it's delivered, but the base will already need to be in place.

4. If you're short of living space indoors, then a garden shed can be converted into something more than just storage.

As long as it's easily accessible from the house and (preferably) has electricity and insulation, it can be an ideal place to do quiet or noisy activities. Sheds can make good workrooms or studios or be used as music or games rooms, home offices, gyms or dens.

5. Fitting out your shed with everything needed to make it useable and comfortable won't necessarily be cheap, but it should be cheaper than moving house. You can convert an existing shed, or buy one tailored to your needs, complete with all mod cons. Specialist companies produce off-the-shelf and bespoke designs, including contemporary garden buildings, with everything included for a fully functioning room.

REVAMP: Garden sheds can be a good addition to your outdoor space and are usually either wood or metal



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Homes & Gardens

Sprucing up garden can help you sell

SPRING is a good time to sell your home. The weather is improving, people aren't yet going away on their summer holidays and the garden is bursting into life.

Making sure you mow the lawn and keep your flower beds tidy could be your most profitable pastime, according to new research.

Some 72 per cent of 2,000 home owners who took part in a survey conducted by National Gardening Gift Vouchers believe that a presentable garden adds value to a home.

First impressions are important and if your front garden needs a quick makeover, consider buying a couple of standard trees or shrubs to put either side of the front door for a grander entrance.

Tatty steps can be masked with pots of evergreens which will last even when spring and summer are over, just in case you don't

sell the house immediately.

Hide eyesores such as dustbins by putting up a framework of trellis in front of them and plant fast-growing climbers over it, even if you have to plant the climbers in pots.

Certain design strategies can help make the garden seem bigger. If you have a narrow or L-shaped garden, consider dividing into two areas and introduce archways or pergolas which will make it seem bigger.

Add curves to a bed to make it more interesting, while strategically-placed outdoor mirrors can also make an area feel greater.

They say the smell of bread baking or freshly brewed coffee helps sell a house, but a gorgeously fragrant front garden may also help, if you plant low lavender hedges along the driveway or other scented plants near your front door.

Eden Project horticulturist Lucy Wenger offers these budget-conscious tips:



PROFITABLE: Keeping lawns and flower beds tidy can be a big help

Budget bedding plants

A tray of tagetes (marigolds) or antirrhinum (snapdragons) will add instant colour to your garden. They come in a range of bright oranges, reds and yellows and both will bloom beautifully throughout the summer.

Look out for argyranthemums, whose bright and cheerful daisy flowers bloom in an array of colours.

They look great in the garden or in big flower pots, but don't plant them out until the last frosts have passed, usually around late May. Feed them weekly with tomato food in the summer and keep them well watered in the heat – snip off any dead flower heads to keep them looking good. They should last until the end of the summer.



Hanging baskets

Make the approach to your front door fresh and inviting with a fragrant hanging basket. Use multi-purpose compost and add water-retaining gel. Trailing surfinias (try Surfinia 'Blue Vein' for scent as well) and bacopa should thrive in a sunny spot, but for shadier corners, try lobelia and trailing fuchsia to create a lush display. Feed them weekly in the summer with tomato food and keep well watered – which may mean twice a day in summer.

Lawn care

Create a greener, lusher lawn by feeding and seeding it. Regular mowing in the summer should keep it healthy. Between May and August, pick a cool, moist day to apply a summer lawn fertiliser or chicken manure pellets. Sprinkle them across your lawn and lightly water.

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PRESENTABLE: Spring is a good time to try and sell your home

Perk up your paintwork

Revitalise wooden fences, gates and sheds by giving them a lick of paint, using paint specifically designed for outside use. To focus attention on the plants, use a colour to divert the eye away from fences and gates such as holly green. This will make them melt into the background.

Jane Templar, garden buyer at Homebase,

suggests: "Think about creating a walkway, either through or around your garden.

"This provides a route for potential buyers when they are looking around and means they don't get muddy as they go. Stone makes for a good path in almost any home, although if your house has a cottage-like feel, consider a gravel path, as this is more in keeping with the style of the property."



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Homes & Gardens

How to create your dream bathroom

By Gabrielle Fagan
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ARE you living the bathroom dream? The ultimate space for a wash-and-brush-up should also double up as a spoiling home-spa for relaxing - and your room is sadly lacking if it's not offering both.

Before you take the plunge on a re-vamp though, it's wise to consider the look you wish to create. It's all too easy to get submerged in the diverse range of styles available, from traditional to chic contemporary, and a whole lot in-between.

"In general, UK bathrooms are small and getting smaller, so it's vital to make use of every inch of space," says Robin Levien, international designer at Ideal Standard.

"One of the most popular contemporary looks is modern and minimal, but not clinical. We're seeing a desire for a clutter-free room, where storage solutions keep everything, from towels to toothbrushes, out of sight until they're needed. This helps make the area a peaceful sanctuary."

Luxury touches - underfloor heating, LED lighting and anti-steam mirrors - are rapidly becoming must-

haves, and technology is increasingly playing a role, enabling lighting, sound and water systems to be programmed and controlled remotely.

Choose from one of three looks, for a bathroom to boast about.

Tropical zone

Create your own little bathing paradise with sultry, exotic decor.

"The bathroom continues to be a key element in homes, playing a multi-purpose, multi-function role. It's an oasis of escapism and relaxation, a place for reinvigoration, transformation, and even somewhere to pose, ponder and play," says Mr Levien.

"Increasingly, this room's borrowing decorative elements more traditionally found in the rest of the home, and picking up influences from the catwalk. There's a current trend for dramatic dark colours and pattern on walls and floors, which with good lighting, can actually make a space seem bigger, as well as delivering that boutique-hotel feel."

Floral patterns and bright botanical colours, like dark purple, rouge and matte greens, are soon set to feature strongly, as a Seventies-vibe makes its mark in bathrooms. But avoid going too retro - an avocado green suite is never a good look.

Drummonds' free-standing Spey



DECORATION: There are a number of ways you can transform your bathroom


Bath can be bespoke-painted to feature a lush tropical design, from £2,975 (excluding VAT).

Follow the theme with a palm leaf

Abyss and Habidecor Feuille Bath Mat, £198, Amara.

Alternatively, create a more purse-friendly far-away setting with a wall

done up with Indigo Tropical Wallpaper, £80 a roll, Gillian Arnold, and accessorise with Aqua Tropical Print Towels, currently reduced from £10-




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ACCESSORIES: Different themes can provide a great look

£30 to £8-£24 each, Debenhams.
Real tropical plants, or faux ones
from Miafleur, whose Artificial Areca

Palm branches are £16.95 each, will
play up the hot-house theme.



Safe harbour

Blue and white's a classic and time-
less choice for bathrooms, because it's
fresh, crisp and evokes a relaxing
coastal retreat.

"It's the subtle finishing touches
which make a big difference, so con-
sider taps and fixtures and fittings as
the perfect way to refresh an existing
sink or bath, and think about these
carefully when choosing a new bath-
room style," says Chris Taylor, design
expert at tap and shower specialists,
Bristan.

"Metallic finishes - gold, brass and
copper, through to brushed steel - are
popular this year. For a classic look,
use a chunky mixer spout to create
sleek elegance combined with tradi-
tional style. Add contrasting blue

nautical-style accessories for a
striking, stylish scheme."

Hotels treat furniture as inter-
changeable for the sleeping, living
and bathing areas of a room. Keep
that aesthetic with pieces which
don't shout 'bathroom', whether
it's a rug, dressing table or bath-
room chandelier.

Refresh a bathroom by updating
taps - far cheaper than a full refit.
Bristan's comprehensive selection
includes a handsome chrome-plat-
ed brass Flute Tall Basin Mixer,
£210. New handles can also give a
lift, and Chloe Alberry has an unri-
valled collection.

Supermarket chain George Home
makes it easy to work a nautical
look. Its range, mostly available in
stores only (with some items online)
features a new blue and white Tattoo
collection (think anchors, sailing
ships and seabirds), which includes a
Shower Curtain, £8; Bath Towel, £6;
Striped Hand Towel, £4; Soap Dis-
penser, £5, and Tumbler, £3. For
more 'ship ahoy' touches, pile up a
trolley with their Porthole Mirror, £7;
Chevron Print Baskets, £7 for set of
two, and Sailing Boat Ornament,
£15.

New wave

Natural, organic materials are up-
and-coming stars in the bathroom.

"Today's best looking bathrooms
feature luxurious natural materials
and finishes," says James Lentaigne,
Drummonds' sales and marketing di-
rector.

"Cast iron and crisp white enamel,
substantial brassware, artisan tiles,
wood and wood veneers, beautifully
figured marbles and plenty of glass,"
he suggests. "Trends are moving
away from fitted furniture towards
individual free-standing pieces. For a
contemporary feel, choose simple and
streamlined pieces.

"There's a new focus on lighting -
the best schemes incorporate a varie-
ty of light sources, all controlled in-
dividually to suit mood."

Traditional 'brick style' White Met-
ro Tiles, £19.50 per square metre,
create a striking look. Lay them in a
herringbone, geometric pattern us-
ing a dark grey or black grout for a
contemporary edge, and play up a
natural theme on the floor with Cor-
nish Driftwood Light Tile, £4.95 each
of £55 per square metre, Topps Tiles.

Dark wood furniture makes a state-
ment in a room decorated in neutral
shades, and John Lewis' free-stand-
ing Bali range is brilliant value and
good-looking: Tallboy, £195, and
Mirrored Double Wall Cabinet, £95.
Its roomy Two Tone Laundry Basket,
£69, could be perfect for towels or
laundry.

There's an informal elegance about
ladder storage, and Red Candy's Um-
bra Hub ladder starts from £100.
Clutter's the enemy these days, so pop
toiletries in Chevron Bamboo Bas-
kets, from £38 each, MiaFleur.
Dunelm's bursting with bathroom
bargains, including a Purity Hamper,
from £19.99, and a 'Calm' Wood
Hanging Word, £7.99.



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Homes & Gardens

2016 KENT LIFE

GARDEN COMPETITION

Entries are invited to the 2016 Kent Life Garden Competition, run in association with Hadlow College, Coolings Garden Centre and in support of ellenor. This year sees new categories and partners: Diocese of Canterbury, Visit Kent, Kent God's Acre Project and Action with Communities in Rural Kent. Pictures by: Leigh Clapp

GARDENERS are being urged to enter a top annual competition celebrating the very best horticultural efforts from around the county.

Organised by our sister title – the glossy lifestyle magazine dedicated to celebrating the county, Kent Life – there are a host of categories to enter and some great prizes to be won.

But the deadline for entries is fast approaching so don't delay – enter today!

The seventh annual Kent Life Garden Awards has three new categories this year, with the winners picking up £200 of Coolings vouchers, coverage in Kent Life and the chance to attend a hugely popular awards ceremony.

Thanks to the involvement of new part-

ners there are now two new categories – bringing the total now to five.

This means it is able to celebrate a wider range of gardens or habitats created or tended by groups who are part of the lives of Kent's many communities. Now these special spaces include big gardens open to the paying public, community gardens and churchyards.

From a shortlist of entries, an expert judging panel will select the ultimate winner.

Deadline for entries is June 10.

For more details visit www.kentgardenawards.co.uk – or fill in the forms on these pages and send them to: Kent Life Garden Competition, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP.

KENTISH GARDEN OF THE YEAR

Category sponsor: Visit Kent

KENT GARDEN / ENGLAND visitkent.co.uk

Information to include about your garden

- The garden must be open regularly to the paying public, and at least four acres in size
- Tell us something of the visitor experience
- Is it accessible?
- How does it reflect something of the character of Kent?
- What other services may visitors enjoy?
- Describe your garden (300 words max).

Your name:

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Address:

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Description/notes:

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AMATEUR/HOME GARDEN OF THE YEAR

Category sponsor: *Kent Life*

KENT LIFE

Information to include about your garden

- What size is your garden?
- What style is your garden?
- How old is your garden?
- Did you create it?
- How long have you been gardening this plot?
- Have you had help from a designer or gardener?
- Are there any special features you would like noted?
- Describe your garden (300 words max).

Your name:

Address:

Phone number (home and mobile)

Email:

Description/notes:

COMMUNITY GARDEN OF THE YEAR



Category sponsors: Action with Communities in Rural Kent and Kent God's Acre Project



Information to include about your garden

- Criteria behind project
- Its aims
- Who is involved
- How it helps/ engages with/ involves the community
- Eco/sustainability

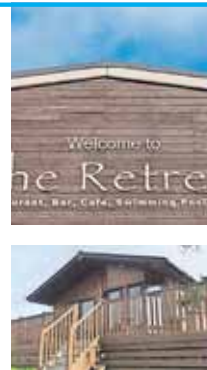
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Homes & Gardens

PRIMARY SCHOOL GARDEN OF THE YEAR

Category sponsor: Kent Life

KENT LIFE

Information to include about your garden

- How many students/classes involved?
- How many years has the garden been a part of the curriculum?

Type of school garden

- Productive • Flower • Wildlife • Water
- Other (please specify)

What activities are the children involved with?

- Planning • Designing • Preparing
- Choosing plants • Planting • Propagating
- Observing • Experimenting

- Maintenance, - Watering, Weeding, Feeding
- Eating produce
- Are there any cross-curricular activities related to the garden?
- Do you have any eco, sustainable projects and plans for the garden?
- Tell us about the garden areas and the children's connection (300 words max)

Name of school:

Address:

Teachers/helpers involved with programme:

Teachers/helpers involved with programme:

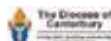
Contact person's phone (day and mobile):

Contact person's email:

Description/notes:

BEST SCHOOL SACRED SPACE GARDEN

Category sponsor: Diocese of Canterbury



Information to include about your garden

- How many students/classes involved?
- How many years has the garden been a part of the curriculum?
- What activities are the children involved with?

What activities are the children involved with?

- Planning • Designing • Preparing
- Choosing plants • Other resources
- Tell us about the garden areas and the children's connection (300 words max)

Name of school:

Address:

Teachers/helpers involved with programme:

Contact person's phone (day and mobile):

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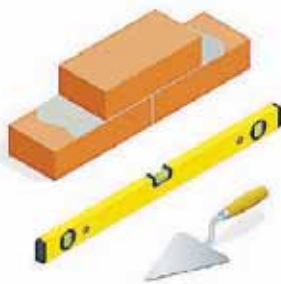
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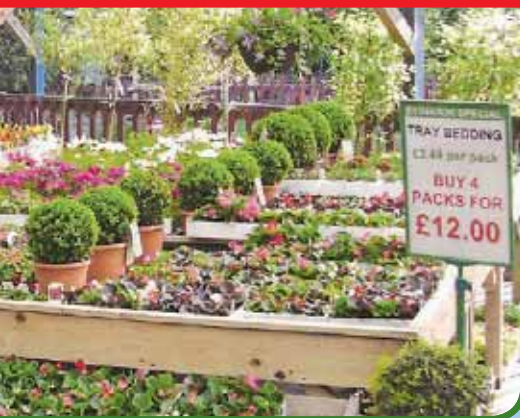
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Historic tower sale sparks controversy over its funding

Chris Murphy on the latest twist in the saga of Hadlow Tower as it prepares to be sold on the open market; despite £4m investment of grant and lottery funding...

IT HAS been dubbed a real life Rapunzel's Tower but this remarkable building in Kent could become one of the most unusual homes in the country. But that has caused a major controversy locally, and even the lottery fund is angry.

Hadlow Tower, near Tonbridge, has been used as a luxury holiday home, commanding as much as £2,000 a week after it was taken over, restored – using lottery funding – and made a retreat.

The firm behind it, the Vivat Trust, collapsed, however, and now it is on the open market.

Just like Rapunzel who was locked away in the tallest tower and only rescued when she let down her long hair, the Hadlow Tower was also built to contain a hapless woman.

This 175-foot tall Grade I listed tower, one of the tallest single properties in the UK, was built in 1838. Known as May's Folly, it was commissioned by wealthy businessman Walter May to house his wife, whom he suspected of conducting a love affair with a local farmer.



But near 200 years later, it is set to change hands again when it is sold through agents Eddisons, based in London.

Associate director of the agents, Abdul Jambo, said: "It will be down to the new buyer to decide what to do



with their purchase. "But it would certainly be one of Britain's most novel private homes if that is what they decide to do with it. It is higher than Nelson's Column to give it some perspective if anyone has not seen it."

And he did point out: "The Vivat Trust was using the properties as holiday homes, so a similar or residential use is the obvious choices for the properties.

"However on Hadlow Tower the trust did accept grant monies which suggest the property must be open to the public during a set period every year."

Having survived the Second World War, where it was used as an observation tower to warn of incoming waves of Luftwaffe aircraft, the gothic masterpiece was seriously damaged in the great storm of 1987.

Some 30 years later, the Vivat Trust took it over and with the help of cash from fundraisers, the lottery, and English Heritage, and a full restoration was carried out at a cost of around £4m.

Now Vivat has gone into liquidation, the tower is on the market – a move which worries locals.

Caroline Elcombe, from the Save Hadlow Tower Action Group, said: "I am very angry we are being ignored. I put 15 years of my life in to getting this building restored. We are all pas-

sionate about this building." A spokesman for the Heritage Lottery Fund said: "We are currently in dialogue with the joint liquidators regarding its future. In light of our investment in the building, we will be working closely with them to ensure it continues to be properly cared for with



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SALE: The tower is one of west Kent's most recognisable landmarks

the appropriate level of public access.
 "However, if the property is sold to a private individual we will look at the possibility of recouping a percentage of our £2.8m grant."

Backing them, local historian Roger

Stanley said: "The lottery didn't give all that money just so some rich individual could have a nice country pile. It is important to Hadlow."

The agent said because it is so novel in design and pretty much nothing

else like it exists in the UK, there is no guide price. Mr Jambo said: "We have rarely, if ever, seen anything comparable come to the open market."

"Because of this, we'll be leaving the market to decide."

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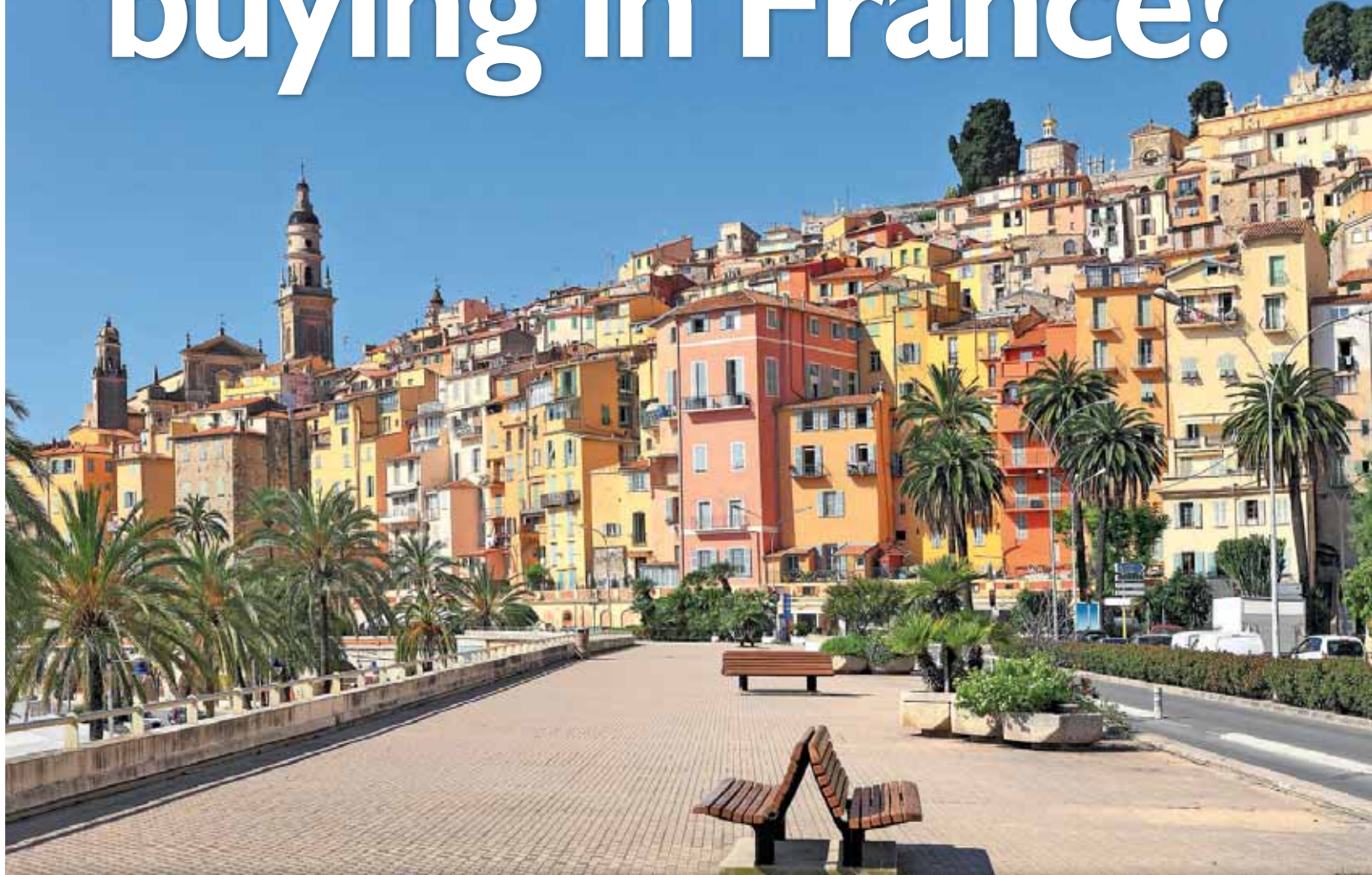
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ROYALS: The Windsors were out in force to see for themselves the remarkable creations at this year's Chelsea Flower Show

Blooming success for our experts

County's growers and designers bagged another clutch of gold medals during this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show in an event which saw its traditional blend of delightful displays and famous faces...

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

FOR gardeners, sunshine and showers is more often than not, the perfect combination to allow their gardens to flourish.

So it was appropriate the gardening world's premier event was blessed with both this week, as thousands flocked the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show.

And there were plenty of smiles heading back to the county - not only from inspired visitors but also from the inspirational designers and teams who created another host of award-winning gardens.

Among them were former Cran-

brook designer, and previous winner, Jo Thompson who won a gold medal in the show garden category.

Her garden design - the Chelsea Barracks Garden - will also be heading to the county - as it will become the centrepiece of the housing development under way at the Royal British Legion Village in Aylesford - dedicated to injured or sick former servicemen and women.

Expected to be completed by the end of the year, the development will include purpose built apartments specifically designed to support mobility needs of 300 ex-servicemen and women, and to help them to live independent lives.

James Rudoni, director of RBLI Living, said: "It will be wonderful to have a garden designed by Jo Thompson at the heart of our new

housing development, where it will contribute to the rehabilitation and recovery of veterans who have sacrificed so much to serve their country."

Ms Thompson, who was attending her eighth year at the Chelsea Flower Show, said: "I am thrilled that the garden will be going to such a worthwhile home."

"The Chelsea Barracks Garden is a traditional British rose garden, reimagined for the 21st century."

"I very much hope it will provide ex-service personnel with a beautiful place to enjoy and a tranquil setting to reflect, as well as offering the chance for residents to get involved with a range of activities to aid their recovery."

Other winners included Brookfield Plants in Ashford, which won

gold in the Great Pavilion for its hostas, Downerry Nursery in Hadlow won gold in the Great Pavilion for its lavender. The gold for French firm Cayeux will be celebrated by Sue Marshall, who runs Iris of Sissinghurst - she helped grow the award-winning bearded iris in the Great Pavilion.

Meanwhile, Folkestone's Simon Richards will be toasting the success of the M&S Spirit of Summer display which he designed.

The event opened to the public from Tuesday to Saturday.

On the Monday, its preview day for invited guests, a host of senior royals paid a visit.

Among them were the Queen, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince Harry and Princess Beatrice.

Other famous faces included Bond girl Rosamund Pike, Judi Dench, Rod Stewart and Katherine Jenkins.



STUNNING: The poppy display impressed - while actress Rosamund Pike, right, joined in the fun





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EXHIBIT: The finishing touches are applied to a model version of HMS Victory, left, within the new building at Chatham Dockyard above. Below, timbers from the HMS Namur found on the site

Dockyard's £9m salute to treasure discovered beneath the floorboards

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

FOR anyone who has paid a visit over the years to the Historic Dockyard Chatham, you'll know that the vast sprawling estate is a quite remarkable testament to Medway's, and indeed the nation's, maritime history.

Everywhere you look, the relics of the heavy boat-building industry lies preserved around you: from the cavernous covered slips which once witnessed warships being built and equipped from the ground up, to the quarter of a mile long ropery where teams worked tirelessly to create the mile-upon-mile of ropes needed for the Navy fleet.

You can almost smell the slabs of iron and hulking wooden timbers in the air, mingling with the gentle waters of the mouth of the River Medway acting as the essential boundary of the 80-acre site.

Since its closure in 1984 – a decision which dealt a devastating blow to thousands of the local community who relied on it for their livelihood, be it directly or indirectly – it has since blossomed again as a unique tourist destination of international renown.

Taken over by a trust tasked with its restoration, it pulls in some 175,000 visitors a year – a figure which rises year-on-year – but now, for the first time, it has added, rather than renovated, a building on the site.

It is a modest addition – a building which bridges the gap between two existing sites but which showcases a find unique in its historic significance.

Because what lies within is the star attraction of a £9m addition to the dockyard which displays historical finds and background with the latest touch screen modern technology to



HISTORY: Dockyard brings past to life

tell the story of the golden age of sail. An era when Britain really did rule the waves.

But the route to unveiling the impressive Command of the Oceans project was far from conventional – nor was the discovery of its centrepiece.

When the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust said it wanted to make changes to the building back in 1995, it was advised by English Heritage that it should call in archaeologists to conduct a survey.

It was not an unusual request; the site is festooned with buildings of significance – almost 50 are scheduled ancient monuments, the rest either Grade I or II listed.

What they would find surprised everyone.

While showing KoS around the attraction, which opened this week, Alex Patterson, collections, galleries and visitor experience manager, explained: "They got to the third layer and uncovered a different type of flooring – different to the Victorian panelling they had experienced.

"They quickly came to realise it

was from a ship's planking and a high concentration of timbers."

Certainly re-using materials after ships were broken up for the construction of buildings or flooring was nothing new for the dockyard.

Mr Patterson adds: "They would just reuse parts of boats. All the Royal Naval buildings were constructed from former warships. The Navy was one of the first upscalers in that respect.

"Timber was so valuable, so they could make these huge buildings by building them out of ships.

"There are buildings here which would have been made out of ships used during the Dutch Wars of the late 17th century for example."

What they had discovered were the remains of one of the most historical of warships – the HMS Namur.

Its battle history outranks that of the likes of the HMS Victory, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar; historian Dan Snow described it as "the ship that defines the course of British history".

It served in the Seven Years War, the American War of Independence

and the French revolution and Napoleonic wars.

Visitors will see all the 245 timbers exactly how they were found. It is a strangely awe-inspiring sight – huge imposing slices of wood lying in what feels like a moodily-lit underground chamber. The markings of tools from when the Namur was built at the dockyard in 1756 still clear to see.

A little imagination of the feet that walked these planks, the sights the Namur would have seen, the places it travelled, stimulates the mind instantly.

"It took about 10 years to identify it," explains Mr Patterson. "Through measurements and the archive we started to look at when the building was created – and in 1834 a new floor was requested – so we looked at the ships being broken up at the time.

"There were two – one of which was the Namur. Further study of measurements and marks on the timber themselves identified it."

So just why was this ship's skeleton laid here?

"Look at the sheer scale and quantity of the beams lying here," says Mr Patterson. "There's far too many to support a floor – so there must have been a reason for it.

"This is a unique find. A lot of ship finds are under water. The details are so much more than from the Mary Rose, for example.

"None of the timbers have been lifted so the ground they are sat on is the ground on which they were laid in 1834.

"Are we certain it's the Namur? As much as we can be. By linking the surveys – laser and physically measuring them – and matching them to the type of ship."

One theory is that the dockyard's captain superintendent at the time the floor was laid was Admiral James Alexander Gordon. He had served on the vessel and it may have been his affection for the vessel which saw quite

so many of its relics form part of the dockyard's very structure.

"But who knows," says Mr Patterson. "What we do know is that she was built here, launched here and ended her life here.

"When discovered it was highlighted as one of the most important finds since the Mary Rose. It's not complete but the 10 per cent we have is hugely significant. This is the original ship so hugely important in the national context."

In addition to the timbers, there is a large display of artefacts from the *Invincible* – a French warship captured by the British in 1747 and used by Chatham's shipwrights to create a new generation of warships for the Royal Navy. It sank by accident in Portsmouth in 1758 and was only rediscovered in 1979. The items recovered from the wreck have long laid in storage – until now.

A range of items are on display from the 600 stored in Chatham.

Funding for the £9m project came from a £4.8m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, support from the Homes & Communities Agency, and the generosity of donors and the trust which runs the site.

Visitors will find plenty of video displays – presented by the BBC's Fiona Bruce – and a host of interactive tablets to find out masses of background information.

There's also a wall which lists the names, roles and salaries of the 2,000 workers at the dockyard at one point it is history – everyone from the shipwrights to the rat catchers.

Even if you have little prior interest of knowledge of this country's naval past, then the Historic Dockyard Chatham has once again proved that it can educate, entertain and inspire in equal measure.

■ Tickets for the dockyard cost £24 for adults, £14 for children and are valid all year long. For more details, see www.thedockyard.co.uk.

Festival of Flight all set for take-off

With tough new safety regulations in place, following the Shoreham crash, organisers of Biggin Hill's air show are gearing up for the biggest and bet yet. **Chris Murphy** reports.

ORGANISERS of next month's Festival of Flight air show in Biggin Hill say they are expecting another sell-out crowd – the first since the Shoreham disaster last year.

The crash in West Sussex, when a jet failed to pull out of a looping stunt and hit the A27 near the airfield killing 11, sparked a major review into safety procedures in order to protect the safety of participants, spectators and those living nearby.

Among them were key requirements from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) that must be met to allow such events to take place.

A spokesman for the Festival of Flight, which takes place on June 11 said: "We have reviewed

all the new CAA rules and implemented them.

"Risk assessments are on a higher level and have been independently reviewed and endorsed. Safety remains of paramount importance."

And they added there were strict limits on the numbers who could attend and that there would be no tickets available on the gate on the day.

The spokesman added: "The limit on spectator numbers is 18,000. This is to ensure no over-crowding. Admission sales will close when this figure is reached and admission is by ticket only."

The event will showcase some of the big crowd pleasers, among them the Red Arrows, Hurricane, Spitfire, Lancaster, Chinook, an

Apache helicopter and many more both in the air and on the ground.

The organisers added: "We are planning some spectacular pyrotechnics to support certain items in the afternoon flying display from a company that has done work on the James Bond movies."

The Apache attack helicopter's weapons load includes a rapid-fire gun, rockets and missiles. The

pyrotechnics will be designed to add a high degree of realism to the simulated attack by the helicopter using the 30mm gun, rocket strikes and a Hellfire missile launch.

Organiser Colin Hitchins said: "We want the display to be as exciting and photogenic as possible as it will be fully in context with what the Apache can achieve in its operational mili-

tary role.

"It is a hawkish-looking machine, the best description is that it is a well-armed flying tank."

■ Admission tickets for the Festival of Flight are available on line at www.bhfof.com or phone the box office on 01689 300 005. Gates open at 9.30am on June 11.

DISPLAY: The Red Arrows will join Spitfires, Hurricanes and Apache helicopters at the event which takes place on June 11.





SOPRANO: Elin Manahan Thomas will be performing with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Dartford

A renowned orchestra and soprano are set to perform

Elin Manahan Thomas will perform with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

THE Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will be bringing their Last Night At The Proms concert to Dartford's Orchard Theatre next month.

The world-famous orchestra will be performing a number of classical favourites at the venue.

These include a number of war-inspired pieces such as Cedar Walton's Spitfire: Prelude and Fugue, The Dambuster's March and A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square.

The concert will also feature well-known pieces such as Edward Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No.1 and his arrangement of Hubert Parry's Jerusalem.

As well as marking the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's 70th anniversary, this year also signifies the tenth anniversary of the first

concert that they performed at the Dartford venue.

The show will be presented and conducted by John Rigby.

Mr Rigby has previously been the musical director of a number of West End shows including The King and I, Les Miserables, The Producers and Phantom of the Opera.

The concert will also feature soprano Elin Manahan Thomas.

Since releasing her first album – Eternal Light – with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, she has performed in a number of prestigious concert and recital halls around the world.

She also performed at the opening ceremony of the London Paralympics in 2012 – entertaining a worldwide television audience of more than a billion.

And she said that she is looking

forward to taking to the stage and performing in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's concert.

She explained: "It's always great fun. The fluffy dress, the rousing songs. My friends all know I sing lots of early music but they come to my Last Night concerts to hear me sing all the big songs and arias.

"It's great fun but I do take it seriously."

With many members of the audience knowing the music well and expecting a good performance, she says that she feels the need to do a good job.

"There's a real pressure to sing at your very best," she said.

"Part of me hopes people will just get carried away with the big tunes but I know they'll be keen the performances meet their high expectations. I promise not to disappoint them."

She said that the orchestra offered her invaluable support during the performances.

"The members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra are such capable and versatile musicians," she explained.

"They quickly tune into how you like to sing a certain piece, and support you. I'm looking forward, in particular, to singing Puccini's O mio babbino caro and Dvorák's Song to the Moon with them."

The Last Night At The Proms concert will be taking place at the Orchard Theatre on June 5.

The show will begin at 7.30pm, and tickets to the performance start at £15.

For more details about the concert, or to book, you can visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or alternatively call the ticket office on 01322 220000.

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RITA, seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, she's very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 421657

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422339

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

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ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889

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LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box: 420237

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SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTW similar male for relationship. Text only Mailbox: 5453851

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427

WENDY, mature, passionate ladylike divorcee seeks no strings casual friendship/fun with gent any age. Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 421605

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. Text only Mailbox: 5320299

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. Text only Mailbox: 5456242

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTW a reliable, sincere man for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5443434

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. Text only Mailbox: 4715158

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only to Mailbox: 4198603

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

BEN, kind caring gent, 37yrs, very tall and well built with curly black hair. Own home, good job, just missing a special lady. Text only Box: 4158248

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nighting out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424013

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTW similar lady to share interests, can travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTW someone to share interests and quality time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422359

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTW 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5441709

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

NEIL, Looking to meet lady for fun, possible LTR with someone special, accom and travel w/Sussex, age/looks unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 4435323

WIDOWER 67, N/S, likes real ale, country music, gardening, DIY, seeks N/S female for lots of TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381143

CHRIS widower, likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

MALE, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all other, WLTW lady with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351

MATURE cross dressing guy, seeking lady willing to apply a full make over and give a manicure and pedicure. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421341

KEN 61, 6ft, slim, likes socialising, drinking, animals, countryside, seaside, meals out, seeks similar lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333017

SHY male seeks confident, strong willed lady, to take the lead for mutual fun, looks/age unimportant. ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421223

MALE, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195

MALE, 54, looking for discreet lady, 60-70, for adult fun and a special friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421085

BARRY, 50, 6ft, well-built, seeks lovely lady for good times, loving and enjoying life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421047

DAVE 64 solvent, working, not bad looking, would like to meet slim, lady to be with female, 50 to 60, to get to know. Chelmsford area. Text only to Mailbox: 4368820

MALE, 60, GSOH, looking for soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387485

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601

FEMININE sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

JIM 45, slim 5'8, blue eyes, short brown hair, very fit, would like to meet older lady for regular N S A fun. East Sussex. Text only Mailbox: 4529089

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MALE 38, good-looking, GSOH, seeks lady, 35-55, for laughter and lots of fun. Kent/Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369301

CALM, kind and good company, male seeking a lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419733

MATTHEW, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419469

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, likes holidays, reading, cinema, WLTW similar professional lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420767

MALE, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, 50-60, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621

NEVILLE 5ft 6ins, Caribbean, likes wine, nights in, seeks female to spend the rest of his life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333911

MALE, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, 50-60, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621

CLINT, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLTW someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951

HEALTHY 61yr old female, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421529

ROBBIE, 54, reasonably fit, bi-curious, I'm very inexperienced and would like to meet a CD or TV preferably but not essential for a bit of fun. Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421357

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

YOUNG 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909



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PETER, bi male, aged 68, inexperienced seeks bi male for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5459879

MALE medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267

MATURE bi male seeks similar for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 4641909

EASYGOING guy, 62, likes outdoors, countryside, walks, seeks slim, N/S quiet guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333477

ALAN, 68, straight acting gay man, kind, caring with GSOH, likes sport, art and going on holidays, looking for another gay man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421529

ROBBIE, 54, reasonably fit, bi-curious, I'm very inexperienced and would like to meet a CD or TV preferably but not essential for a bit of fun. Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421357

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

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Theatre hosts coaching course to help enhance students' skills

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

TUNBRIDGE Wells' Assembly Hall Theatre has teamed up with AXA PPP healthcare to run a performance coaching course this summer.

The course follows on from their first programme, which was launched last year.

It will begin on July 14 and runs with 10 students.

The students will take part in a practical day of active learning - entitled stage for life - which is designed to equip 16 and 17 year olds with key attributes to enhance their employability and life skills.

Catherine Brunger, education manager at AXA PPP healthcare says: "At AXA PPP, we acknowledge the competitive and often tough world that young people are facing today and know how valuable support can be in helping them to prepare them for the future."

"We are proud to be supporting this event in partnership with the Assembly Hall to offer local students a fantastic opportunity to develop key employability skills."

Led once again by arts engage-



SKILLS: The course was originally run last year

ment and communication consultant Jennifer Fordham and Kate Waugh, an experienced educator, students from St Richard's Catholic College in East Sussex, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys and Beacon Academy will receive individual coaching over the course of the day, culminating in them giving short presentations on the Assembly Hall stage.

Coaching will take place in

small groups, consisting of one-to-one sessions using peer to-peer and professional feedback.

Ms Fordham explained: "The 14-19 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum emphasises the importance of work-related learning, yet schools often only have a finite amount of time to devote to these skills."

"This training event aims to redress that by helping participants

practise employability and team-working skills, as well as developing flexibility and resilience."

Cheri Strudwick, marketing and development manager for the theatre, added: "We are delighted to be hosting a second workshop with AXA PPP healthcare - the day really does equip students with essential skills and techniques for their further education, the workplace and for life."

Russell Kane in Margate

COMEDIAN Russell Kane will be bringing his show - Right Man, Wrong Age - to the Theatre Royal Margate on November 30 at 7.30pm.

To book, call the box office on 01843 292795.



Play exploring perception

CONTEMPORARY play Captured will be performed at Canterbury's Marlowe Studio on June 22 at 8pm.

The show centres around Isaac and Sophie and deals with perception and reality.

For more details, or to book tickets, you can visit www.marlowetheatre.com.

Clary's comedy show

COMEDIAN Julian Clary will bring his show, The Joy of Mincing, to Folkestone's Leas Cliff Hall on June 30.

For further details, or to book, you can visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.



Play that explores words

GYLES Brandreth will be discussing language in his show Word Power.

The show will be making its way to the Gulbenkian in Canterbury on June 25.

It will begin at 7.30pm and tickets start at £19.

For further details, or to book, visit www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.

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The Dirty Dancing film hits

A Night of Dirty Dancing will be performed on stage at the Woodville, Gravesend, on June 15 at 7.30pm.

Tickets range from £19 to £21. Visit www.woodville.co.uk for further details.



Long and Petrie perform

COMEDIAN Josie Long and singer-songwriter Grace Petrie will be performing together at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on July 23.

Ms Long will be presenting her latest stand-up material during the collaboration.

The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets can be booked by calling 01303 760750.

Dark Harold Pinter play

HAROLD Pinter's The Birthday Party will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate.

The show will take place on June 10 at 7.30pm.

Visit www.theatreroyal-margate.com for more details.



All the hits of Pink Floyd

PINK Floyd tribute act Think Floyd will be performing a number of well-known hits at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone.

The performance will be taking place on October 14 at 7.30pm.

Visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone to book.

New weekend event to showcase motorcycles

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

A NEW weekend event will be showcasing classic motorcycles and vintage aircraft.

The British Motorcycle Federation (BMF) has joined forces with Aero Bikesure and Headcorn Aerodrome to create the event – Merlins and Motorbikes.

It will be running at Headcorn Aerodrome next month.

An aerial display from The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) in two Spitfires will be taking place as well as 'the great British bike off' – a 1,200-metre drag race between a Vincent Black Shadow and the Aero Legends Spitfire TD314 MK IX.

There will be a chance to meet special guest Tom Ward from BSB Superstock 600.

The event also features live music – with musicians such as Band of Gypsies lined up to perform, a selection of trade stalls, a bike jumble and family entertainment including a bouncy castle and funfair.



A variety of food will be available and there will also be a 'best in show' competition and several exhibitions to experience.

Jim Freeman, chairman of the BMF, said that Merlins and Motorbikes is set to be a 'special event' for visitors.

"We're delighted to be working with Aero Legends and WWII Headcorn Aerodrome to launch this exciting debut event, which is set to attract thousands of visitors over the weekend," he said.

"The mix of classic motorcycles

and vintage aircraft, combined with numerous other attractions, makes this a special event in the calendar," he added.

"What could be more evocative than the lazy, effortless, thunder of a Merlin-engined Spitfire over Kent?"

Merlins and Motorbikes will be running in Headcorn from June 11 to 12. Both weekend camping and day tickets are available, with discounts for BMF members. For more information or to book visit www.headcornevents.co.uk.



EVENT: Merlins and Motorbikes will be at Headcorn Aerodrome



AIRCRAFT: An aerial display from Spitfires will take place

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Jimmy's letting humble potato do the talking

Farmer Jimmy Doherty is championing the Jersey Royal, which he calls the 'Champagne of potatoes'

HE might be known for his rare-breed pigs, but entomologist-turned-farmer Jimmy Doherty's latest initiative lets their veggie sidekick – the humble potato – do the talking.

"The Jersey Royal is an iconic food item and something we should celebrate," the 40-year-old enthuses of his collaboration with the seasonal spud. "If the Italians or French had this, they would be going on about it all the time."

Since taking on a 100-acre farm more than 10 years ago, which was famously documented in BBC Two series Jimmy's Farm, Mr Doherty has made a name for himself in the world of TV, appearing in shows including

Food Unwrapped and Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast, with childhood friend Jamie Oliver.

Add to that three books and a number of free-range food products, and it stands to reason that he's the ideal patron to champion the unique Jersey crop – or as he dubs it, "the Champagne of potatoes."

Available from April until the end of June, Jersey Royals' Protected Designation of Origin status means its five-generational farmers use 130-year-old techniques to ensure their nutty flavour, creamy consistency and flaky skins.

Delivered to supermarkets within 48 hours of being gathered up, the TV foodie is also a firm believer that these potatoes – and other varie-



PATRON: Jimmy Doherty is promoting the Jersey Royal

ties – should be a diet staple.

"We forget potatoes are full of vitamin C, antioxidants and fibre, and we're moving to other carbohydrates like rice and pasta. We should go back to eating lots of potatoes."

"It's about portion control, that's all," he adds, in response to any spud critics, and the father-of-three practises what he preaches at home.

"The simplest way [to serve Jersey Royals] is freshly dug with butter, but I use them for my kids all the time as mini roast potatoes."

"Rather than peeling and chopping, I just put them straight in the roaster and they love them."

"I wish we could emulate what Jersey does," he continues. "If all of the schools [across the UK] were excited

by Jersey Royal season, and did little competitions where they grow the potatoes, it would show pride and respect for the environment."

It's an ethos he looks to implement at Jimmy's Farm, which today boasts a nature trail, butterfly house, award-winning restaurant, science and food festivals – and a zoo licence in the pipeline.

When he's not running the land, the star feels lucky to be dipping his toe in the world of showbiz – and even luckier, on occasion, to be doing so with good pal Mr Oliver.

Next up, he's pleased to be hosting a show that will see him travel to all corners of the globe, in search of people who've swapped the rat race for the wilderness.

Tale of the 1968 strike

A STAGE adaptation of the 2010 film Made in Dagenham will be performed at the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone.

The show tells the story of the Ford sewing machinists strike in 1968 and features songs such as Everybody Out.

It will be running at the Maidstone venue from June 8 to 11, with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Call 01622 758611 to book.

Hit TV show recreated

COMEDY show Graeme of Thrones will be performed at the Central Theatre, Chatham, on June 8.

It tells the story of Graeme, who decides to recreate hit TV show Game of Thrones with the help of Paul and Bryony.

The show starts at 8pm and tickets range from £16.50 to £18.

For further details, or to book, you can visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

Rock and roll musical

ROCK and roll musical The Rocky Horror Show will begin its run at Dartford's Orchard Theatre next month.

The show is directed by Christopher Luscombe and features songs such as Sweet Transvestite, Damn It Janet and Time Warp.

It will be running from June 6 to 11, with performances at 6pm, 7.30pm and 9pm.

For tickets, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call the ticket office on 01322 220000.

Tell Me On A Sunday

JODIE Prenger will be starring in Andrew Lloyd Webber and Don Black's classic musical Tell Me On A Sunday.

The show will be performed on stage at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on June 8.

The score includes the title song, Tell Me On A Sunday and the chart-topping Take That Look Off Your Face.

Tickets range from £23.50 to £26.50. Call 020 3285 6000 to book.

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We are delighted to announce the launch of the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016



Headline
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NOMINATIONS are now being invited for the 2016 Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards. The awards dinner will take place at Ashford International Hotel on October 17 from 6.30pm to midnight.

The prestigious awards, which launched in 2013, are designed to champion, highlight and offer a showcase to the great and the good of the region's food and drink industry, including local producers and suppliers, small farming businesses, chefs, restaurants, pubs, cafes and hoteliers.

All will be people who care about the countryside and the future of our local environment.

The companies included will all be nominated by you, our Kent Life and Kent on Sunday readers.

We want to know if you've enjoyed a fantastic meal at your local pub or have been impressed by the produce

and service at your neighbourhood farmers' market or farm shop.

The nomination form is available here and will be repeated. It is also available to complete online at kentfda.co.uk, where you can read more about the awards and see pictures of last year's winners.

Entries close on August 7. Our handpicked panel of high-profile judges who all live or work in Kent will then select a shortlist, starting the independent judging process where finalists will be visited or interviewed to determine a worthy winner in each category.

All finalists will be invited to the prestigious awards ceremony, where they will enjoy a reception and three-course meal with wine before finding out if they are a winner.

This is our fourth Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards and we are immensely proud to be able to offer you once again the opportunity to reward and recognise

the deserving businesses within our local food and drink industry that go above and beyond expectations.

These awards are what you make of them so if you are the owner of a restaurant, a chef or local producer then spread the word among your clients, customers and visitors.

It takes no time at all to make your nomination. You can email, post or nominate online.

We are looking for quality over quantity, focusing on good comments rather than simply the number of nominations received, so everybody is in with a chance no matter how big or small their business.

■ Don't forget to let us know when you have made your recommendation on our Twitter page @kentlife and @KOSMedia by using #kentfda – similarly, if you are looking for nominations, please use this hashtag

Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards 2016 Nomination Form

Nominate your Kent food and drink favourites by using this form or email us at kentfda@archant.co.uk

Please post your entry form to:
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Ashford TN23 1PP

Or you can email us at:
kentfda@archant.co.uk

Copies of the form and posters to advertise your entry are available ___at www.kent-life.co.uk and at www.kentnews.co.uk.

The closing date for entries is Sunday, August 7, 2016

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<p>Food Producer of the Year Sponsored by Motorline Maserati</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Drinks Producer of the Year</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Farm Shop of the Year</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>
<p>Farmers' Market of the Year Sponsored by Perry's Chartered Accountants</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Pub of the Year Sponsored by Eastwell Manor</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Restaurant of the Year Sponsored by The Foxhunter Park</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>
<p>Chef of the Year Sponsored by the Canterbury Auction Galleries</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Customer Service of the Year Sponsored by Fenwick Canterbury</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>	<p>Kent Food & Drink Hero of the Year</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p>

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR



This popular category is open to anyone in the food and drink industry who has started a new venture within the last 18 months.

We want to know what impact they have made on the local community and if they have started to achieve any success further afield.

Are they helping to promote Kent food and drink to a new audience or have they found a new way to promote an old favourite?

INDEPENDENT FOOD OR DRINK RETAILER OF THE YEAR



This celebrates that special food or drink shop that we all treasure.

The retailer who includes wonderful local produce in their offering and knows where all their stock comes from to make that special link between field and plate.

Our winner will have a special 'must-have' range as well as making a real contribution to their local community.

Paying a visit to their shop will be a treat in itself.

CAFE OF THE YEAR



This category has changed from the previous Tea Shop of the Year to include places that also specialise in coffee! Tea and coffee shops are an

integral part of the Kent food and drink scene. Who makes the best tea and coffees, serves the nicest cakes and biscuits and the freshest scones? Are the sandwiches freshly cut and liberally filled?

Most importantly, are most of the ingredients locally sourced? We look

FOOD PRODUCER OF THE YEAR



This category celebrates our local producers.

We are looking for someone who consistently provides both top quality local produce and service to their customers.

We are also keen to hear of any innovations.

If they're doing something new, we'd like to hear about it.

So if your local baker, grocer or farmer delights then please let us know.

DRINK PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This category celebrates our local drink producers.

Whether it's gorgeous Kentish fizz or delicious juice, we want to find the producers who play such a vital role in the county's food and drink economy.

We want to know who you think makes the best drink, alcoholic or not, in the county, and what it is that makes it so special.

We are keen to hear of any innovations, so if they're doing something new, for example, introducing a fabulous new flavour, then we would like to all hear about it.

FARM SHOP OF THE YEAR

A good farm shop needs to have that extra-special something to tempt farmers away from their local supermarkets.

Are the staff friendly and knowledgeable, is the range of produce and the layout of an excellent standard, does your local farm shop offer a box scheme?

Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised on that farm, or nearby and if not would the owner be able to tell you where it is from?

Nominate your favourite farm shop now.

FARMERS' MARKET OF THE YEAR



The key to a good farmers' market is not only the range of produce and the quality of its stalls but also the principles that it supports - for example, does it work as a co-operative with other farmers? Is most of the produce sold there grown or raised locally? Are the stallholders welcoming and knowledgeable? Let us know so we can tell everyone the best place to go.

PUB OF THE YEAR



A good pub these days has to offer more than a warm welcome and excellent ale. We're looking for an inn that also offers delicious locally-sourced food, fantastic

customer service and real value for money. Pubs are genuinely the hub of their local community.

If you know a great one, even if it isn't your local, let us all know.

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR



The Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Restaurant of the Year needs to offer an incomparable

dining experience, from the ambience to the service and most importantly the food. Is it locally sourced? Do they support local producers and are they recognised on the menu? Do they have local as well as international wines and champagnes and can the staff tell you more if you ask?

CHEF OF THE YEAR



Kent is blessed with some outstanding

chefs working in a fantastic array of restaurants. The Chef of the Year should be someone who has devoted him or herself to serving the best possible food. They'll demonstrate technical ability, use of seasonal ingredients, presentation of the food and an understanding of how flavours work together. Above all, we are looking for passion - that magic ingredient that defines true greatness in the kitchen.

CUSTOMER SERVICE OF THE YEAR



Most of our awards recognise customer

service in some form. This category celebrates this vital element for its own sake.

Do you know a person, organisation or establishment that offers fabulous service that goes above and beyond what you expect?

We all know excellent service when we have received it, now is your chance to get it recognised. If you know a person, company, producer, pub, shop or restaurant that is a delight to deal with, then let us know.

KENT FOOD AND DRINK HERO OF THE YEAR

Kent has a food and drink scene that is among the most vibrant in the UK - as you would expect from the Garden of England.

As well as being blessed with some of the final local produce around, the county also has a variety of fantastic eateries located in local towns and villages.

This category will be celebrating the individual who has made a positive impact on the county's food or drink community.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile in order to help promote Kent to a wider audience?

Someone who has shown that they are passionate about local produce throughout?

Now is the chance for you to nominate your very own Kent Food and Drink hero and give them the recognition that they deserve.

Get in contact with us and let us know who you think would be a worthy winner.

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Turkey claims are insulting

HARRIET Baldwin MP, economic secretary to the treasury described it as "the reddest of red herrings", adding "the issue is not even on the table".

What was she talking about? Turkish accession into the EU of course. This is another of the scare tactics used by the Out campaign to obfuscate the argument.

Turks have been living and working in the UK for decades. They have successful businesses here and are not the "murderers, thieves, cheats or terrorists" that Brexiteers make them out to be. In fact, they find this highly insulting as you or I would if you were described as such as a foreigner living in the EU, or anywhere else in the world.

However, this is part of the arsenal that Brexiteers hope will sway the voting public to their side. They have lost the economic argument and all they have left are insults, hyperbole or half baked ideas.

Marguerita Morton,
 Tunbridge Wells

The truth? You can't handle it

I'M sorry if giving the facts people should know about the EU, offends Jim Turner's delicate feelings! [KoS letters, last week].

It's better than the vague apocalyptic assertions by David Cameron, that we shall have world war, lose £50,000 on our house prices, the stock market (in the process of being taken over by the German Boerse), will crash, etc etc.

How ever do you make an argument if you don't present the facts? How can you make a choice if you don't have the facts? The bottom line is, do we want to hand control of our country to 27 others, with the resulting mayhem we've seen in Europe?

Does Jim Turner have instructions for his doctor, bank manager and so on, never to tell him the truth, because he can't handle it and to hold back any bad news?

Phil Granger,
 West Malling

Let's stay in and campaign inside

IN reply to Mr Granger [KoS letters, last week]; firstly I have little interest in the ever increasing hype, hysteria and opinion dressed up as fact spouted by both the

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Getting out of EU is key to export boost

REGARDING whether exiting the EU would leave the UK free to ban live animal exports, the answer appears obvious.

The fact that a fine amounting to millions of pounds was imposed by the EU on Thanet District Council because they suspended (not banned) live exports after more than 40 sheep had to be destroyed, being too injured and unfit to travel, shows who holds the overall power.

If we stay in Europe, then even if the 1847 harbour, docks and piers clauses Act were to be amended so ports could refuse to transport live animals for slaughter, would the EU still have the power to impose such huge fines again under the open borders and free trade policies?

In addition, the Cameron government has shown little concern for any animal welfare or the 1847 act could have been amended without MP Craig

Mackinlay having to present his private member's bill to amend it. All praise to him for doing so.

Under the Treaty of Lisbon 2006, farm animals are designated as sentient beings, but as soon as they are to travel, they are considered to be mere agricultural produce.

Therefore, so as not to breach the European free trading laws and movement of goods, continued efforts have been made by animal welfare groups for a maximum of eight hours to transport the animals. As it would be virtually impossible to do so within such a restricted time, this brutal and appalling trade would surely end.

So far these pleas have been ignored by Europe. Therefore, unless it can be proved that staying in the EU will be beneficial for all animals and that live exports can be stopped, I shall more than likely be voting Brexit.

official In and Out camps.

I back staying in as most young people want to and, as he asks how to reform the EU, the 'Another Europe is Possible' UK group and the Euro-wide 'Democracy in Europe Movement 2015' manifestos can be found via their websites.

Both are already campaigning to reform the EU from the ground up for the benefit of all; rather than just the multi-national corporations and their political allies.

Thus I strongly suggest that we stay in and then help campaign, on a pan-European wide basis, and vote only for those parties who

fully or broadly back such proposals so as to provide a solid mandate for change.

Elsewhere it is he who bandies about the figures which both Jim Turner [KoS letters last week] and recently the Office of National Statistics criticise for their misuse by both sides, so I just point out that the UK 'fee' to the EU is one of the smallest of the UK's overall annual spend of around £747 billion. The largest amount is of course welfare of which pensions are nearly half; and when adding in the amounts we get back in funding grants and so on, the

amount falls to currently around £154 million per week.

Also, remember that there are about 2.2m Britons living and either working, or as pensioners in the EU, who may lose out if we leave; and on holidays to the EU there is the EHIC insurance card which entitles all to free treatment.

On refugees we are all obligated as human beings, by UN Treaty, and on historic grounds as well to help; especially given our bogus Empire and the duplicitous Sykes/Picot agreement in 1916 whereby Britain and France carved up the Mid-East after the First World War for our own ends and now we see some of the denouement.

Finally, the problems caused by migration are basically the misuse of lax laws by some firms and is why the EU post working-time directive needs to be implemented in full to help redress this both here and across the EU; followed by the previously mentioned proposals above.

Ray Duff,
 Fokestone

Don't say I got my facts wrong

I MUST respond to Mike Eddy, Labour leader, Dover District Council [KoS letters, last week].

Apart from him party political sniping; I take exception to his implied criticism that I got my facts wrong. I recommend he study his own council's motion on live exports which was passed with a very nearly unanimous vote.

After spending time thoroughly examining the trade in numerous overview and scrutiny committee meetings, the council decided to lobby Government for legislative change. South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay and the farming minister, George Eustice are now working towards achieving those very aims.

It is scandalous Mr Eddy claims that if we leave the EU we "walk away" from animal welfare in transport legislation.

Speaking to Mr Eustice on his visit to our group last week, he made it very clear he would replace the EU regulations with similar, improved UK regulations, and at the same time introduce improvements to existing UK law.

The change in legislation will always produce winners and losers and I promise you, Mr Eddy, that a leave vote will mean that just for once, the dumb animals suffering at the hands of callous transporters, over long distances, will be the winners.

Reg Bell,
 Thanet Against Live Exports

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Sissinghurst by Greg Salmon, New Ash Green

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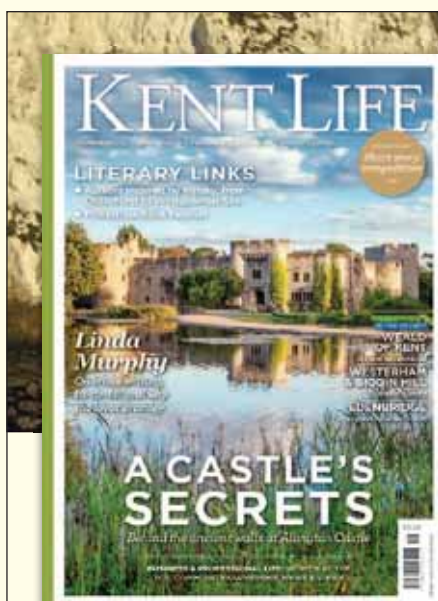
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Also available on 16 October with entertainment by Dave Grant (ex-Paper Lace) and a tribute to Dusty Springfield with Vicki Lambert; and 6 November with Simon Paul of Union Gap and 60s Song Book featuring Keith Slater. Price is £119pp

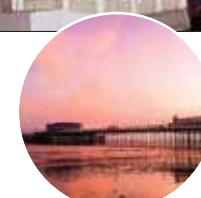
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By Steve Loader
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NEW LOOK: The facelifted 2008 now has the style to go with its skills...

Crossover's makeover looks good

PREVIEW: Peugeot's 2008 shows off a rarity – a facelift that makes a good car look a whole lot better than before...

RARELY are motoring facelifts completely successful. They vary from underwhelming to shocking – like a celeb who has overdone the plastic surgery. But Peugeot has got it just right for the revamped 2008 junior crossover, arriving soon. Essentially a compact and clever car that is nice to drive and with a unique selling point that I shall come to later, it just lacked something in style – no longer.

It now gets the latest and more assertive Peugeot front end treatment and mid to high spec models acquire chunky wheel arch extensions and scuff plates to go with the pseudo off-roader styling.

There's even an 'Ultimate Red' colour option – pioneered on the brand's 308GTi performance star and now giving a bit of attitude to the 2008 – plus the sporty GT Line spec seen on several other Peugeots.

Apart from the smart new grille, Peugeot has also added chic and shaped black and chrome headlamps and 3D LED rear lights, with the marque's distinctive lion's-claw motif.

There wasn't much wrong with the cabin: fitted out with high quality materials and generous stowage, and airy with or without a Peugeot signature Cielo panoramic roof,



it is roomy for the size of car.

The versatile rear cabin allows a 410-litre boot to transform swiftly to 1,400-litre load space, accessed across a low load sill of just 60cm.

But the 2008's big plus from the start was the Grip Control super traction control, on engines

above 100bhp. This delivers 4x4 style grip from the car's front-wheel drive only layout: hmmm, yes, I was skeptical, until I went to the car's original launch in 2013 and Peugeot asked me to drive up and down an indoor ski slope.

It works, so I expect the latest 2008 versions to perform out of their facelifted skins too.

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Clio, 25 - and looking at her best

A quarter century on and Renault's supermini star looks and drives better than ever, while also delivering all-round practicality, writes **Steve Loader...**

RENAULT is currently celebrating the Clio's 25th birthday - and rightly so, as it's been the French marque's glamour girl and saviour several times over those years.

Now in her fourth incarnation, the Clio is also at her best and most eye-catching.

Indeed, the latest car's arrival four years ago heralded a new corporate style that sparked a revival of sales and image for Renault.

With a wide stance and the slim-waisted effect of the side feature sill - also effective on Renault's Captur crossover - this supermini has a lean and sporty look whether it's the £11,145 Expression entry model or a scorching Renaultsport performance flagship.

And one would have to be a Philistine to moan about the lack of a racy three-door option, to complement the one-size-fits-all five-door layout.

This argument is helped by hidden rear door handles suggesting coupe rather than hatchback lines; "oh, that old trick" I hear you say, because it truly has been over-used - just look at the sad job done on the Honda HR-V - but it's been nicely



and properly applied on the Clio.

Inside, there's also a high level of spec and quality that eluded previous Clio generations, with a big intuitive touchscreen, though the factory-fit sat nav can sometimes grind teeth better than it finds routes.

Lost or not though, the car is a joy to drive: performance models

excepted, earlier Clios leaned - literally - towards the supple French suspensions of old.

But the latest car offers the best of both worlds, smothering bumps and bangs while managing a neat and tidy stance on bends rather than old-style door-handle cornering.

So, allied with very little wind,



engine and tyre intrusion into the cabin, this is a supermini that feels as comfortable and competent as cars from a bigger class.

There are excellent engines to suit all too, including diesels, though I'm never sure these are right for superminis as it takes many miles to recoup a higher buying price, and

Clio Dynamique S Nav TCe 90

Price:	from £16,975
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Ford Fiesta

there is greater wear and tear from the heavier engine - not to mention its effect on handling pleasure.

I really liked the test car's light and lively .9-litre engine petrol engine though. The 90bhp turbocharged three-cylinder unit revs well for sporty excursions - if a tad noisily - while claiming a combined mpg of around 60 if driven frugally. Low CO2 emissions incur just £20 road tax after year one at current rates, and Renault's is one of the better warranties - four years/100,000 miles.

And while the latest Clio is bigger than its predecessors, interior and boot space has increased too, allowing four adults to ride in comfort, while the 300-litre boot plus 1,146-litre 'seats down' total load space is amongst best in class.

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Notice is hereby given that Alfresco Events of 20 forest way, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4FW has applied to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council for the PROVISIONAL STATEMENT of An outdoor Exhibition or film From 12:00 to 23:59 on Friday 12th August 2016. for the premises Kings Hill Sports Park situated at 200 Beacon Avenue, Kings Hill, Kent. ME19 4QP

Any person wishing to submit representation about the proposals should make them in writing to: Licensing Services, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4LZ giving in detail the grounds of objection by 21/06/2016

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary of conviction for the offence is £5000.

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Denly hails team after mad month

The batsman hit 206 then became a father for the first time

Cricket

By Mark Pennell

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MAY has been some month for Joe Denly.

He started last week by recording a career-best 206 not out in Kent's county championship clash with Northamptonshire and ended it with 75 off 38 balls to help Spitfires' win Friday's T20 Blast opener against Somerset.

Then, on Monday, the right-hander found himself unbeaten on 34 at Derby, but a phone call in the early hours of Tuesday suddenly turned Denly's world upside down – his wife, Stacey, was about to go into labour with their first child.

Having cleared his plans with Kent coach Jimmy Adams, Denly jumped in the car, but his return to East Kent was far from smooth.

"It was a hectic journey back and I hit quite a bit of traffic. I was still two-and-a-half hours away when I got a call from the midwife, basically suggesting I hurry up."

Henry Joseph Denly – who was not expected until June – duly arrived just after 11.30am, but with his father still on the road.

"That was the only disappointing thing," he said.

"I got a call from Stacey when I was about a mile away to say he'd just been delivered. I'd missed the birth by about 10 minutes. The M1 and M25 had got the better of me, but I was still delighted, over the moon."

The arrival capped an amazing fortnight for Denly who paid tribute to ninth-wicket partner Matt Hunn



BUSY: Joe Denly has enjoyed some month

for his help in seeing him through to the landmark in the Midlands.

"I was only on about 130-140 when our No9 Mitch Claydon ran past one from Monty Panesar to be stumped," he said.

"That meant I only had Matt and Imran Qayyum, who was on debut,

to bat with. I wasn't even thinking of 200 then.

"I farmed the strike after that, but overall Matt did a brilliant job for me, batting almost an hour for three, which enabled me to get to 199 until 'Hunny' got out to the last ball of a Rob Keogh over."

Shakey ends on top in Brands Hatch thriller

Superbike

SHEPPEY'S Shane 'Shakey' Byrne has become the fifth different winner in the 2016 British Superbike Championship as the home hero claimed an emphatic victory at Brands Hatch.

Leon Halsam was victorious in race one, but Byrne came out on top in the second race after a fierce fight to the finish with Richard Cooper.

Luke Mossey and James Ellison got a lightning start off the line and the pair traded blows to hold the lead ahead of Cooper and Haslam.

The Nissan GT-R Safety Car was deployed on the ninth lap when Michael Laverty suffered a technical problem with his Tyco BMW.

Ellison held the lead and when the race resumed Cooper was pushing



WINNER: Shane 'Shakey' Byrne

him all the way as Ellison was forced to retire with a technical issue.

Four-time champion Byrne though

was ready to bounce back from his ninth place in race one and he was moving up the pack rapidly, delivering a master class of moves at Clearways, leaving just Cooper ahead of him in his quest for his first win of the season.

The Be Wiser Ducati rider left it until two laps remaining to make his move; completing the hat trick at Clearways to take the lead and hold off his rivals to the line.

Cooper returned to the podium ahead of Haslam, who now leads by just three points ahead of Knockhill next month.

Bridewell narrowly missed out on a double podium finish in fourth place with Dan Linfoot and Honda Racing completing the top five which represented as many different manufacturers.

Sport Shorts

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Greenhalgh to return to Gallagher Stadium

MAIDSTONE United have announced midfielder Ben Greenhalgh is to return to the Gallagher Stadium after a season with Concord Rangers.

The 24-year-old won a Ryman Premier championship medal with the Stones before opting to move to Concord – a club he had played for at the end of the 2012/13 season.

Jay Saunders had kept tabs on the midfielder – whose previous clubs include Welling United, Ebbsfleet United, Inverness Caledonian Thistle and Stenhousemuir – during last season, where he made 47 appearances and scored 18 goals.

Heading the opposite way is Alex Akrofi, who will be joining the Beach Boys on loan at the start of next season.

Fans' favourite Matt Bodkin has also departed after making 92 appearances for the club, in which he enjoyed back-to-back promotions.

Saunders said: "Decisions like this are never easy but I'm in no doubt that he'll get plenty of offers in the coming days."



TRANSFERS: Maidstone



MOVES: Bromley FC have released four players from their contracts

Emmanuel future still unclear at Hayes Lane

THE future of Bromley star striker Moses Emmanuel remains unclear following a major squad overhaul.

Following the culmination of the National League campaign, where the Ravens finished mid-table, Neil Smith announced that he would be keeping Adam Cunningham, Alan Julian, Alex Wall, Ali Fuseini, Ben Chorley, Ben May, Bradley Goldberg, Jack Holland and Joe Anderson, Lee

Minshull, Louis Dennis, Max Porter, Reece Prestedge, Rob Swaine and Ugo Udoji on the books at Hayes Lane ahead of the 16/17 season.

Meanwhile, the likes of Adam Birchall, Aaron Tumwa, Paul Rodgers and Pierre Joseph-Dubois have all left the club, but Smith confirmed there is no news on top scorer Emmanuel, or teammate Sean Francis, at present.

Willis departs to join Sri Lanka

KENT Cricket Club have confirmed that one of its most senior coaches is to leave after more than two decades to join Sri Lanka.

Simon Willis, a former wicketkeeper-batsman, will leave the club later this month after 23 years' service as player and coach for a new role as high performance manager.

Willis has been a key figure in the prolific Kent Cricket Academy,

established in 2003 after he represented the county's first XI between 1993 and 1999.

In more than a decade of coaching at Kent, Willis, 42, has helped to nurture six future England internationals including Tammy Beaumont, Sam Billings, Joe Denly and Lydia Greenway among 25 players that went on to play senior cricket for the county.

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